The Sacramentary
(LIBER SACRAMENTORUM)

Historical & Liturgical Notes on the Roman ^Missal

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PART V

THE ETERNAL NUPTIALS OF THE LAMB

(THE SACRED LITURGY FROM TRINITY SUNDAY TO ADVENT)

in .

IANITOR · ANTE · FORES · FIXIT · SACRARIA · PETRVS

QVIS · NEGET · HAS · ARCES · INSTAR · ET · ESSE · POLI

PARTE · ALIA · PAVLI · CIRCVMDANT · ATRIA · MVROS

HOS · INTER · ROMA · EST · HIC · SEDET · ERGO · DEVS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

EASTERN INFLUENCE IN THE ROMAN LITURGY

THE prediction of a great writer of antiquity who attributed to the Supreme Being—to a *divina mens,* that is—the plan of having placed Rome in such a position that she might be the more easily able to make herself mistress of the world, has been fully accomplished in the history of Christian Rome, which shows how all the early cosmopolitan hegemony, which had been the soul of pagan Rome, was intended, in the mysterious designs of Providence, merely to serve as the foundation and base of a new universal empire—that of the Catholic religion. In either instance Rome is always the *sacra urbs* chosen out by the *divina mens;* she is still not only the particular spot which gave birth to the Romans, but also the prophetic city to which the whole world turns, the capital, the *umbilicus orbis,* destined not merely to be, but to command: *"quae praesidet in regione Romanorum,"* as St Ignatius of Antioch would say.

Aman may feel himself a stranger in France, in Spain, or in any particular city where he does not happen to have been born, but no one who is, at least to some extent, in touch with civilization and with religion can feel himself a stranger m Rome, the city which still embraces the whole world within the wide circle of her living power and influence. It was not without reason that the praise of the Romans was written in the Book of Machabees by the Holy Ghost himself, for thus did Paul of Tarsus claim his Roman citizenship when appealing from Cæsarea to Cæsar, and thus did Dante, in the *Divina Commedia*—inspired by the words of St John Chrysostom, who desired that the lists of the census of Cyrinus, on which the name of Jesus appeared, should be preserved in the archives of the Capitol—place at the head of the citizens of Rome the adorable name of Christ: *Di quella Roma onde Cristo è Romano*[1]—that Rome of which Christ is citizen.

This is not the place in which to trace the history of this

[1] *Purgatorio,* xxxii, 102.

cosmopolitan, universal, or, as we should now say, international character which divine Providence has been pleased to confer throughout the ages on the Eternal City, and of which we to-day, beholding it in the supernatural light of faith and illuminated by more than twenty centuries of history, fully understand the high destiny—namely, to imprint the seal of Catholicity (that is, of Universality), without any trace of narrow nationalism, on that See which was chosen to be the centre of the Catholic Church, the apex and keystone of the whole Christian edifice.

Such a theme is too vast to be satisfactorily expanded in these pages, but in order to give our readers some idea of the extent, complexity, and importance of this subject, we will consider it from one particular point of view, and will treat of the influence exercised by Byzantium on Rome during the later days of the Empire, especially as regards the Liturgy, a matter which clearly comes within the scope of these studies.

The first period of the Church in Rome, like that of the Church in Jerusalem, is dominated by Jewish influence. St Paul knows this, therefore it is *ad Romanos* that he addresses his principal epistle, in which he sets forth at length the relations which must now exist between the Old and the New Covenants, between the Jewish *Torah* and the grace of Jesus Christ, which knows no racial differences.

The Christians of Rome, worshippers of the one true God, whom the Jews also served, and heirs of the promises made to Abraham, found themselves, with regard to the pagan idolaters, in a position not very different from that of the Jews. It is not strange, therefore, that in such circumstances as these they should have without difficulty adopted some of the harmless external rites of the religious polity of Israel—for instance, various euchological forms, certain funeral customs practised in the catacombs, the division of the clergy into a kind of council of elders as assistants to the bishop, and the formation of a committee of seven administrators of the common patrimony, who were made responsible for distributing alms in the various quarters of the city.

Even after the Jews had been driven out of Rome by Claudius, the Hebrew element must have been strongly represented in the primitive Christian community at Rome, for the early authorities show that, besides the list of Asiatics whom St Paul greets in the last chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, there existed also, at the time of the martyrdom of the Apostles, a group of Jewish Christians so powerful that they very nearly succeeded in carrying off the relics of SS Peter and Paul. After the Jews came the Greeks.

The influence of the East upon the early Roman Church

did not cease when the funeral pyres and flaming torches of the Vatican Circus had done their work. Cletus, or Anacletus, was an Athenian ; Clement had exercised the evangelical ministry at Corinth; Evaristus was of Jewish parentage. Tclesphorus was a Greek, Hyginus an Athenian, Anicetus a Syrian, Eleutherius a native of Nicopolis, Victor and Melchiades were Africans, Anterus, Sixtus II, and Eusebius came from Greece, not to mention the Popes who followed after the peace of Constantine, of whom we know that Zosimus was a Greek, Gelasius I an African, Theodore a Greek, John V, Sergius I, Sisinius, Constantine, and Gregory III Syrians, while John VI and Zachary were Greeks. To these foreign Popes we must add other members of the clergy, and in the early Middle Ages the various Greek, Syrian, Palestinian, and Armenian monasteries which were to be found in Rome in consequence of the emigration from the East, which lasted until after the iconoclastic disputes.

The result of this Oriental influx is seen, not only in the liturgical traditions, but also in the primitive language adopted by the Roman Church in her public and official worship, which language was not Latin, but Greek. This fact, though it may seem strange, is well proven. Even outside the sphere of Christian life, the large number of inscriptions and *graffiti* bear witness to the great extent to which Greek was then used as the diplomatic language throughout the Roman world; thus in Asia Minor, at Antioch, and at Alexandria the native languages were pushed into the background, and Greek was everywhere spoken and written. Rome, too, was obliged partly to abandon the ancient language of Latium and to conform to the fashion.

In regard to the Christians, we must remember that, as they were largely drawn from the various parts of Greece, Asia, and Egypt, so, whilst Latin might be commonly used among the people, the only possible official and liturgicai language for the Roman Church during the first three centuries was Greek. For this reason, Mark, at the request of the faithful in Rome, records in Greek the Gospel story as he had heard it from the lips of Peter. Luke, living in the house hired by Paul whilst kept as a prisoner in Rome, writes in the language of Hellas his two books—the one on the life of Christ, the other on the acts of the Apostles, especially those of Paul. Clement addresses an epistle in Greek to the turbulent Church of Corinth. Hermas, too, describes in Greek his visions concerning the teaching of the *Pastor* on penance. Justin, Tatian, Caius, Pope Victor, and Hippolytus preach, comment on the Scriptures, compose pamphlets; in a word, put forth all their writings in the language of Demosthenes, though not, maybe, with his purity of style.

The Sacramentary

Tertullian at Carthage was the first to write in Latin, and it is evident that in this he was a pioneer, for he was obliged to invent a completely new Christian phraseology, which, though unpolished, was yet extremely expressive.

The crypt where the Popes arc buried in the Cemetery of St Callixtus confirms this theory, which was first advanced by De Rossi. The brief epitaphs carved on the tombs of those early Popes: ΕΥΤΙΚΙΑΝΟΣ ΕΠ—ΦΑΒΙΑΝΟΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΔΟΥΚΙΣ—ΑΝΤΕΡΟΣ ΕΠ · ΓΑΙΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ are all in Greek precisely because that was the language used in the eucharistie liturgy itself.

It is well known that Victorinus, who wrote at Rome about the year 357, quotes the Anaphora of the Mass in Latin as well as in Greek; and later, when the presence of Byzantine officials in the now dilapidated Palace of Augustus raised Greek once more to the status of a diplomatic language, the *Ordines Romani* prescribed that the Lessons in the Mass should be read both in Greek and in Latin. The same thing was done at Jerusalem as in the time of Etheria, where on Sundays the clergy were in the habit of reading and commentating on the Holy Scriptures in Greek as well as in Syriac. The custom still in use, in accordance with which the Pope reads the Epistle and Gospel of the Mass in Greek and also in Latin, is a last survival of the bilingual liturgy of the fifth century.

In the baptismal ceremonies regarding the catechumens at Rome the place of honour was given to the Easterns. Thus on the day of the great scrutinies, as they were called—that is, on the Wednesday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, during the stational Mass in the vast Basilica of St Paul—the acolyte, having arranged all the candidates for baptism before the altar of the Apostle, was asked by the Pontiff : *Qua lingua confitentur Dominum Jesum Christum ? Graece,* replied the minister. *Annuntia fidem illorum qualiter credunt,* said the Pope, and the acolyte, holding a child in his arms, recited the Creed in Greek : πιστεύω cîç. This rite survived the Byzantine power in Rome by many years, and while the knowledge of the Greek tongue has wellnigh died out amongst us, it is found prescribed also in the Sacramentaries of the tenth and twelfth centuries, where, however, the Creed, although given in Greek, is written in Latin characters.

Again, during the Paschal Week, the Greeks held the primary' place. For instance, on Easter night, after Vespers had been sung in the Lateran Basilica, the procession went to celebrate other minor evening Offices in the various chapels, which at that time were grouped about the baptistery. In the octagonal baptistery itself the antiphonal

psalm Ὁ Κυριος *ἐβασίλευσεν* was sung, each verse being alternated with the *Alleluia.* After all these Offices had been sung, there followed a solemn reception of all the higher clergy in the *aula Leoniana,* where three different kinds of wine were drunk, which are mentioned in the *Ordines*—*de Graeco, de pactis,* and *de Procoma*—notwithstanding that at Rome there is never any lack of the wine of the Castelli; but the Eastern colony evidently preferred the wines of their own country. In the meantime the boys of the *Schola Cantorum* sang a paschal hymn in Greek in honour of the Pope. This custom, which was continued throughout the week and survived beyond the tenth century, shows us how deeply rooted was the Byzantine ceremonial, even at the Papal Court.

Amongst the different forms in which the Oriental influence became established in Rome, we must mention the schools and the various national institutions of a religious character. It is not necessary to enumerate all the distinguished persons who at different times came from the East to the *sacra urbs,* from Polycarp, the disciple of St John, in whose honour Anicetus waived his right of presiding at the eucharistie liturgy in the synaxis of the faithful, from Abercius, Bishop of Heliopolis, who came to Rome to marvel at the holy city, "robed in purple and shod with gold," from Justin, from Tatian, from Julius Africanus, who in their turn came to draw the water of ecclesiastical knowledge at its very source on the banks of the Tiber, down to the Greek emigrants of the iconoclastic period.

We need only refer to the many schools of theology founded in Rome in the second and third centuries by various Eastern heretics, who, already condemned by the churches in their own country, did all they could to twist to their advantage the authority of the Roman Church, unlawfully endeavouring to wrest from her, if it were possible, approval of their doctrines. Such an attempt, for example, was made during the pontificate of Hyginus by the heresiarch Valentinus, by Marcion, and later also by Praxeas, of whom the sharp-spoken Tertullian wittily wrote that he did two evil things in Rome—*Patrem crucifixit et Paraclitum fugavit*—because, while he opposed the excesses of the Montanist illuminism, he exaggerated the unity of the divine nature, to the detriment of the Trinity of Persons.

These schools of theology *(nolentes volentes)* did not limit themselves to spreading the light of knowledge, but were so many advanced posts of national propaganda in the very heart of the great capital of the Roman world. The well-known recumbent figure in the Vatican Museum representing the River Nile—over which swarm a number of joyous little genii clambering on to the legs, arms, and shoulders of the

patriarch of all the rivers, some even clinging to the beard of the good-natured giant—may be taken as typical of Rome at that period, when strangers from all parts of the world crowded within her walls.

During classical and pagan times many sanctuaries had been raised in Rome to Mithra, Isis, Osiris, etc., which very often represented as many centres of Asiatic or Egyptian proselytism. Even in Christian Rome, before the conversion of the Franks, Germans and Anglo-Saxons had given rise to their respective national hospices or *scholae* around St Peter's, such as the *Schola Saxorum,* etc., the various peoples of the East had, during the Byzantine era, established in the queen of cities their own national sanctuaries, usually dedicated to the most revered martyrs of their own land.

The Alexandrians, for instance, were devoted to St Mennas and to SS Cyrus and John. The sanctuary of the two latter martyrs at Alexandria had, by the efforts of the famous Cyril, taken the place of the ancient temple of Isis the Doctor, which was situated eleven miles or more from the city, with the sea on the east and sand-dunes on the west. The fame of the miracles worked by God at that shrine soon caused it to become a Lourdes of ancient days. The sick and ailing were brought thither from all parts; hospices for pilgrims were erected, and baths constructed, to which the sick were carried, just as happens in our time at Lourdes.

The Alexandrian colony in Rome, therefore, would not deprive themselves of the satisfaction of building also on the banks of the yellow Tiber, at their own expense, a sanctuary to their holy martyrs Cyrus and John, at the same time imitating as far as possible the characteristic features of the basilica at Alexandria. The Church of SS Cyrus and John—which, by corruption of the name *Abba Cyrus* to *Paciro—Pacero,* finally became *Santa Passera*—comes into view at a distance of a mile and a quarter along the Via Portuensis, between the banks of the Tiber and the sandy hills of Monteverde. We do not know if it ever attained to great notoriety, but at any rate it caused the feast of the two martyrs to be included in the Roman Calendar, and their memory was duly preserved down to the time of the liturgical reforms undertaken by Pius V.

Another saint for whom the people of Alexandria professed great devotion was St Mennas, whose basilica stood about eight miles from the city, on the shores of Lake Mareotis. There, too, were hospices for pilgrims, health-giving baths, and healing waters, which were carried to the sick in all parts of the world in specially made phials. Specimens of these phials, which contained water from St Mennas, are to be found in many museums, and impressed on the terra-cotta may be

seen the image of the martyr between two camels lying at his feet. These phials were filled at the stream which flowed past the basilica of the saint and furnished the water for the baths, just as now little bottles are filled with water from the Grotto at Lourdes.

It was only natural that the Alexandrian colony at Rome should wish to build in the Eternal City a church in honour of St Mennas, and, as to its site, that was easily chosen. Their thoughts turned at once to their native country, where the two sanctuaries of the martyrs, who also belonged to the category of *Anargyri,* rose on opposite sides of the city of Alexandria, each being on the very edge of the water. Therefore they chose the left bank of the Tiber, along the Via Ostiensis, whence one sees the hills of Monteverde. On this spot, almost opposite the sanctuary of SS Cyrus and John, they decided to erect a church dedicated to St Mennas, which church was destined to attain to such great importance in Rome that on the feast of the martyr, November **n,** St Gregory the Great himself went thither in procession to celebrate the station and preach a homily.

This was an exception to the rule which admitted of no stations at a sanctuary outside the walls, except those of the Apostles and of St Lawrence ; but the merchants of Alexandria had to be taken into consideration, for they could influence public opinion to a very great degree. Gregor}·, therefore, having arrived at the Church of St Mennas, began his homily by assuring the people that on that occasion he would not keep them long, seeing how late the hour was and how far their place of meeting was from the centre of the city. It is doubtful whether the Alexandrians realized that they had been taking liberties with the Roman Liturgy. Indeed, even the fame of St Martin of Tours was surpassed at Rome by that of St Mennas, for his feast, which fell on the same date as that of the Egyptian martyr, November **n,** had to be postponed until the following day.

A curious misunderstanding arose in later times from this incident. St Mennas having in course of time been forgotten, the Roman Calendar was found to have two consecutive Feasts of St Martin—on November **n** and 12 respectively. The liturgists promptly solved the puzzle. November 11 is undoubtedly the Feast of the Bishop of Tours, they argued, therefore the St Martin who is commemorated on the twelfth must be some other person. Of those who were suggested, the choice fell on the Pope of that name, who thus acquired the distinction of having an annual feast in his honour. As to poor St Mennas, the innocent cause of all this trouble, he was obliged to be content with a mere commemoration in the Liturgy on November 11.

Much the same thing· occurred at Rome in the case of the *cultus* of the two Egyptian saints, Patermutius and Copretes —afterwards corrupted into Coppete—whose church in the Ghetto was destroyed some three centuries ago.

Antioch, the capital of the East, was also desirous of being represented in some way in Rome : not, indeed, by the Feast of the Chair of St Peter on February 23, for this is precisely the date of the ancient *natalis Petri de Cathedra,* as testified in the *Natalitia Martyrum* of the year 335, but by the sanctuary of one of her own citizens, Timotheus the martyred priest of Antioch, who came to Rome at the beginning of the fourth century, and who was buried in the gardens of Teona, in a vault at the second milestone on the Via Ostiensis, almost opposite the tomb of Paul the Apostle. This cemetery, which was carefully examined by De Rossi, appears to have been entirely isolated, and the walls of the very deep staircase by which one descends to the crypt of the martyr are covered with *graffiti* and religious salutations, engraved thereon chiefly by his fellow-citizens of Antioch, commending themselves to his prayers.

We must at least make mention of some of the other Eastern sanctuaries transferred to the banks of the Tiber, chiefly those in honour of the martyred *Anargyri* who were so generous in working cures without reward. Amongst these, St Theodore, whose round church stands at the foot of the Palatine and whose *natalis* occurs on November 9, holds a special place. He is the St Toto of the Roman populace, with whom the ancient and traditional custom still survives of carrying children who are dangerously ill to the church of the martyr, in order to obtain their cure. To this wealth of Oriental saints in Rome belong St Anastasia of Sirmium and the martyrs Cosmas and Damian, whose basilica on the *Sacra Via* was held in such great esteem that, in order to check superstition, it was thought fit to repeat to the people in the liturgy of the day, when the Lenten station was held in that church, the warning words of Jeremiah : *Nolite confidere in verbis mendacii dicentes: templum Domini, templum Domini, templum Domini est.*

The saints Quiricus and Julitta, with their churches in the Forum Romanum and in the Forum of Nerva, deserve especial notice, as also the Persian saints Abdon and Sennen, St George in Velabro, the numerous shrines in honour of the martyrs SS Sergius and Bacchus around the imperial *fora,* the Church of St Sabbas on the Aventine, and the sanctuaries of St Pantaleon and St Phocas of Sinope in Pontus, of whom Asterius of Amasea said in the Second Council of Nicea that the Romans *non minus colunt Phocam quam Petrum et Paulum,* These are merely a few instances

of the result of Eastern zeal in Rome, for, in order to complete the picture, we should have to add a list of the different monastic sanctuaries belonging to the Orientals in the Eternal City, such as the Abbey *ad Aquas Salvias,* where the head of the famous Persian monk and martyr St Anastasius was kept, the *Boethianum* monastery of the Syrian monophysite monks, not to speak of the other Greek and Oriental monasteries built or restored by the Popes from the seventh to the eleventh centuries.

All these foundations in Rome could not but exercise a strong influence on the Liturgy of the Apostolic See, and they contributed to the preservation of that international, or rather Catholic, character, in the widest sense of the word, which has always distinguished the Papal Court, and does so still to this day. It must also be remembered that nearly all these Eastern sanctuaries, erected preferably in the neighbourhood of the Forum or of the Palatine, had each their own corresponding church on the shores of the Bosphorus, so that, by reason of all these Byzantine gems which adorned the golden circlet of the Queen of the World, we might repeat, with but a slight alteration, the words used by St Jerome when writing about Christian Rome in the fourth century : *Roma facta est Hierosolyma : Roma facta est Constantinopolis.*

Rome had indeed become Constantinople, but in her love for the East she gave the preference to Jerusalem, which she set about reproducing on a small scale within her own walls. The Roman reproductions of the holy places of Jerusalem arc well known. The result of this endeavour was that the artistic and dramatic character which the Liturgy had assumed in Palestine, where, by means of processions, hymns, and appropriate lessons, the mysteries of our holy religion were re-enacted on the very spot where they had first taken place—that character so well described in all its charm by Ethcria—was quickly imitated at Rome.

Thus the Lateran, with its Basilica of the Saviour and circular baptistery, took the place of the *Anastasis* at Jerusalem. There, rather than at St Peter's, the great paschal vigil was held; and as at Jerusalem the faithful went on Good Friday to the *Martyrion,* where the true Cross was solemnly shown to the people, so at Rome the station was held in *Hierusalem,* as the Sessorian Basilica was called, where also a portion of the holy Cross was preserved and duly shown to the faithful.

It is not unlikely that St Helena, when she built or restored the basilica, intended to imitate the sanctuary of Golgotha with its double chapel, *ante Crucem et post Crucem.* This would then explain the meaning of the oratory behind the

apse, adorned with mosaics, which may still be seen in the vault of the Basilica of Holy Cross, and which we may call the oratory *post Crucem*.

We have already seen that a great part of the Good Friday ceremony at Rome, where the Pope walked barefoot in procession to the Sessorian Basilica, swinging a thurible before the casket which a deacon carried, containing the relic of the holy Cross, was derived from that in use at Jerusalem, as was also, most probably, the Greek *Trisagion* sung by the choir, during the adoration of the Cross.

The Liturgy of Jerusalem celebrated the station of Christmas night at Bethlehem. Rome wished to do the same, so Sixtus III constructed in the Basilica of Sicininus a crib, or rather a vault, in imitation of the place where the Redeemer was born, and there the vigiliary Mass of the Nativity of our Lord was celebrated.

Other customs which have also found their way into the Roman Liturgy from the East are : The station at the Sessorian Basilica in the middle of Lent, just at the time when the Byzantines hold a special ceremony in veneration of the true Cross; the dedication of the *Martyrion* on Calvary on the fourteenth of September; the Feast of All Saints; the penitential cycle in preparation for Lent, as also the great solemnities in honour of the Blessed Virgin, the Assumption, the Purification, the Nativity, and the Annunciation, with their characteristic torchlight processions. These popular night processions originated in Antioch; St John Chrysostom brought them to the shores of the Bosphorus, St Ambrose introduced them at Milan, and finally an Eastern Pope, Sergius I (687-701), instituted them at Rome. Together with these feasts and torchlight processions in honour of our Lady, certain portions from the Greek Liturgy have also been adopted by Rome, among which we may note the following antiphons : *Nativitas tua Dei Genitrix Virgo,* etc. [1] *O admirabile commercium,* etc. ;[2] *Mirabile mysterium,* etc. ;[3] *Hodie coelesti sponso;*[4] *Adorna thalamum tuum;*[5] *Sub tuum praesidium;*[5] *Vadis propitiator;*[7] *Dies sanctificatus illuxit nobis;*[6] *Gaudeamus omnes in Domino,*[9] etc.

It would take too much space to set out here in full all that Rome has borrowed from the East, the region whence we

[1] *Brev. Rem., In fut. Nativ. B.M.V. Ant ad Magnif. II Vesp.*
[2] *Idem., In fut. Circumds. Ant. ad Ben.*
[3] *Idem., In Epiph. Dom. Ant. ad Ben.*
[4] *Grad., In Purif. B.M.V Ant ad process.*
[5] Antiphon in honour oi the B.V.M.
[6] Ancient Responsory of the Office of Tenebræ.
[7] Alleluiatic verse in the third Mass on Christmas Day.
[8] Introit for the feast of All Saints.

receive light, whether in the order of nature or in that of grace. By this wise eclecticism the Apostolic See has given the world a further proof of her truly cosmopolitan character, which, enabling her to expand beyond her seven hills and her classical *pomoerium,* has caused her to adopt all that is good and beautiful wherever she finds it, without needing to shut herself up within a barrier of narrow and repellent nationalism, as so many lesser churches have done.

Discipulos Oriens misit, quos sponte fatemur. Thus wrote Pope Damasus in a hymn in honour of the Apostles Peter and Paul, placed *ad catacumbas;* and we might add that Rome has received from the East, not only the Apostles, but Christ himself, together with the Holy Scriptures, the four great Councils, the early Fathers, besides many Popes, the divine Office, the religious life, several festivals of saints, and the music of the Liturgy, thus verifying in the holy Apostolic City that which St John wrote of the heavenly Jerusalem—that all the monarchs of the world would bring to her their riches and their glory. Pope Damasus adds, *Roma suos potius meruit defendere cives,* meaning to say that Rome, whilst she accepts the tribute of the treasures of all lands, raises the value of these very riches by conferring upon them a character which she alone can give—that of catholicity or universality, through which the most beautiful Oriental gems, from the moment that they are set in the diadem of Rome, become the sacred patrimony of the universal Church.

As the ocean receives back into itself the waters which were first drawn from it, so Rome receives from all and dispenses treasure to all. For divine Providence has decreed that Christian Rome, in the full religious significance of the word, can never be the exclusive capital of any state or empire, for it is she who represents the *municipatus* of Jesus Christ, himself a Roman citizen.

CHAPTER II

THE PLACE OF MONASTICISM IN THE LITURGICAL LIFE OF ROME

THE development of the monastic life in the capital of the Christian world constitutes one of the most astonishing phenomena in all history. Asceticism, which from apostolic times had freely flourished among the faithful in the persons of the *Virgines* and the *Viri Dei,* under the protection and guidance of the clergy, suddenly, after nearly three centuries of intimate social life, turned away from the fellowship of men, although still maintaining a close connection with the hierarchy, and sought the deserts of Egypt and the solitudes of Palestine, leaving the world with but little expectation that, being once gone, it would ever retrace its steps and again mix with the noisy life of the city.

The causes which determined this exodus into the desert—encouraged also by the clergy—were numerous. Amongst them we may reckon: The necessity of escaping from the later persecutions at the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth; the example of the first fathers of the solitary life; the desire of withdrawing oneself from the sad social and economic conditions of the Byzantine Empire, which was already nearing its ruin; the discouragement felt by nobler minds at the sight of the servility of the Eastern clergy, who even then were showing a strong inclination towards heresy and schism; the worldliness which threatened more and more to weaken the ancient faith of the masses, thus causing Christianity to lose in intensive force all that it gained exteriorly by its rapid expansion during the Constantinian period.

All these motives are, however, of merely secondary importance, and the conscientious historian will not accept them as final nor exaggerate their consequence, since it is clear from the plentiful literature of the age that, hidden in the inmost depths of the Christian soul, and behind all this intense movement towards a greater solitude, there lay an end far more noble than the mere desire for personal safety, or disgust at existing social conditions. This aim was clearly pointed out by Osee when, speaking of the spiritual fervour

of the soul which after the desertions of youth at length returns to God, he says in the name of the Lord : *Ecce ego ducam earn in solitudinem et loquar ad cor ejus. . . ,*[1]

It was in the desert that the gnostic, the philosopher, the ascetic (as all these exalted beings were originally called) first took the name of anchorite or monk, and by this title it was at first intended to indicate not so much the physical solitude as the general isolation in which the religious dwelt, an isolation which he maintained even towards those who professed the same vocation as himself.

At times the spiritual direction of a number of " solitaries " who acknowledged a common διδάσκαλοί as their spiritual father, as in the case of St Antony and St Hilarion, brought the disciples together again to a certain degree; but until St Pachomius founded in 325 his inspired cenobitic, or rather congregational, order in the Desert of Tabenna,[2] early Egyptian religious life appears to have been entirely without any attempt at organization, and, instead of being a corporation, it has all the appearance and character of a series of ascetic ideas and aspirations purely personal and entirely independent of one another; they contributed only in a secondary measure to the reform of Christian society.

With St Pachomius monasticism takes a fresh direction, or, to be more accurate, it retraces its steps. Absolute solitude is excluded, not only because of the grave dangers it held for souls that were not yet strong enough to be left to themselves, but because it allowed valuable forces to be wasted which, if gathered and bound together, could give strength and durability to the monastic corporation. It is in connection with Pachomius that we can now, for the first time, speak of a religious order or community.

Pachomius, however, only laid the foundations of that which was to become the monastic life of the West. His ideals were to be still further developed, for, if we consider the matter carefully, we see that a true religious order, capable of exerting under his guidance a strong spiritual influence within the Church, did not as yet exist. It seems, indeed, that with the exception of a purely domestic rule, economic and disciplinary, not even the *coenobium* of Pachomius can be said to foreshadow the great mission which, by the decree of divine Providence, monasticism was to accomplish, especially in the West.

The community formed by Pachomius, like that of Shnudi, did not last long, but the spirit which informed it could not be extinguished under the ruins of those cells destroyed by the infidel. It fled away from them to inspire the monastic labours of Hilarion and of Basil, who were the founders of

[1] Osce ii, 14.

[2] The Thebaid.

the religious life in Palestine and in Pontus. The monasteries, therefore, of St Basil in Cappadocia represent the legitimate development of the principles already established by St Pachomius, principles so full of life-giving energy that when, two centuries later, a Roman, St Benedict, in his *arx* at Monte Cassino, desired to draw out the final plan in accordance with which the future monastic institutions of medieval Europe were to be developed, he, too, was obliged to seek his inspiration in the rules of Tabenna.

Unlike the early disciples of Antony and Macarius, who lived in caves in complete solitude, Basil and Benedict established the *coenobium*—the *domus Dei, quae sapienter et a sapientibus administretur*—with its library, its practising of various handicrafts within the enclosure of the cloister, its division of the monks into groups of ten (at first, in all probability, according to their different occupations); somewhat, in fact, resembling the Pachomian monasteries.

At Subiaco, indeed, we find the first examples of twelve monasteries being grouped together under the authority of one head, St Benedict, who, whilst living in the central house—the general novitiate—and watching over the training of the young aspirants to the new congregation, exercises the direct and immediate authority of a superior-general over all the monasteries which he had founded. This is precisely the type of the congregation ruled by St Pachomius.

From the moment, then, in which, by a new conception of the monastic life, absolute solitude and complete separation from all human intercourse were no longer considered as essential to the ascetic ideal—so much so that amongst the followers of St Pachomius it became customary to send the surplus produce of the monastery to the Egyptian markets to be sold for the benefit of the community—the monks began, disastrously indeed, to have dealings with the outer world, and, coming in this way into closer contact with the towns, were no longer able to stand aloof from those conditions which regulate the progress of the life of a nation.

The question then arose whether, as it was permissible to distribute the material result of the labour of the monks, it would not also be desirable to turn to the advantage of the whole Christian community the superabundant spiritual energy, the belief in the ascetic ideal, the Catholic *gnosis,* and the charity of the religious. This was, in so many words, the question discussed and answered affirmatively in a council held at Rome under Boniface IV (608-15).

In response to the invitation of the bishops, who quickly realized in the monastic life a powerful means of religious propaganda, the monks entered with full confidence upon the way which Providence was opening out before them. The

great cities, such as Jerusalem, Antioch, and Constantinople, at once received the monks within their walls; Rome herself, where in the first half of the fourth century monastic life was practically unknown, after deriding the first monks who accompanied thither the great Athanasius, ended by accepting the new ascetic ideal with such enthusiasm, chiefly through the efforts of Epiphanius, Jerome, and Marcella, that at the end of that same century the austere Doctor of Bethlehem admitted that she had rivalled Jerusalem in the number and the fervour of her urban monasteries.

St Augustine, too, in the heat of his controversy with the Manichees, points to the edifying example of the holy and studious life led by the monks at Rome; and when towards the end of the same century Dionysius the Scythian took up his abode by the banks of the Tiber, in order to devote himself to meditation on the spiritual life and to the study of the Holy Scriptures, he found himself in surroundings which were already well prepared and very favourable to his inspired intentions.

But here a question arises. These religious were certainly fully at liberty to return to the city from the desert, and to adopt the social constitution of the *coenobium* in preference to the initiative of the individual, with immense benefit to the Christian body; but from the moment that they lived in the midst of the world upon which spiritual force, overflowing from their cloisters, spent itself, could they still claim the primitive title of "monks"? In other words, looking at the matter from a purely historical point of view, can we distinguish monasticism as instituted by St Basil and St Benedict from the later conceptions of the religious life which the Franciscans and the Dominicans of the thirteenth century, and later still the Clerks Regular, founded within the Church?

The answer to this question may be found in the fact that, when the Mendicant Orders arose with their recognized mission of co-operating with the clergy in their pastoral care of souls, by preaching and administering the sacraments, the novelty of this conception of the religious life did not escape the notice of their contemporaries, and it was, for this reason, strongly opposed at Paris. This opposition shows that, until then, European monasticism had seemed to the various nations something wholly other than an ecclesiastical order, formed into a vast society with a centralized system, whose aim did not differ essentially from that of the rest of the clergy. Until the coming of the Mendicant Orders, the distinction between the two kinds of clergy, secular and regular —*uterque clerus,* as we say now—was altogether unknown in the Middle Ages, for the simple reason that monasticism, although it always permitted some of its members to enter in.

the priesthood for the service of the community, yet was never in ancient times a clerical or ecclesiastical order.

The study of the Benedictine tradition through more than fourteen centuries of its history shows us that the difference between the monastic ideal and that of the more recent clerical orders consists precisely in this—that whilst the activity of the latter is essentially ecclesiastical, and is directed to preaching· the Gospel and administering the sacraments, monasticism aimed directly at the interior sanctification of its members. We should, therefore, be almost tempted to describe the Benedictine *coenobium* as a superior school for the attainment of Christian perfection.

If, then, monasticism exercises, even outwardly, a regenerating influence on the people, this is a reflected action, and proceeds chiefly from the attraction which the example of a religious house, realizing in the highest degree the evangelical ideal, exerts on the minds of men. Monasticism acts on the outer world only indirectly, usually by showing what a holy life lived in common can be, and this already goes far towards realizing its aim. In the mission of the Mendicant Friars personal effort holds an important place, as, for instance, when a great popular preacher explains from the pulpit the principles on which the family and the Christian state should be formed.

Monasticism, on the other hand, with its theoretic stronghold, whose basilicas gleam with mosaic and gold, where by day and by night amid the sweet-smelling incense the choirs of monks answer one another in psalmody ; with its cloisters rich in twisted columns, under whose vaulting has flourished all manner of arts and crafts ; with its libraries, its vineyards and meadows, its fishponds and forests ; monasticism with its bands of workers among the religious divided into companies according to the craft which they follow; with its schools of letters for the young and of theology for their elders ; with the special conditions attached to its domains, by which the peasants around were associated as dependants in the work of the monastery, and private property placed under the protection of the great abbeys, so that it acquired a special and sacred character which made it secure against the rapacity of the overbearing; such a monasticism as this lends reality and substance to the Gospel teaching, and sets forth a living and shining example of the mystical City of God.

Amongst the Mendicant Friars, who resemble a regiment on active service, everything is mobilized. Superiors and religious alike reside now here, now there—wherever there may be a position to be defended or a stronghold to be attacked. With the monks, on the other hand, in keeping with the conception of their life as stationary, everything is

so fixed that this character of stability is one of the spiritual signs of their special vocation. By the profession of his monastic vows, the monk is admitted to form part of the family of his own monastery, and undertakes before God to remain in it until death. The monastery, on its part, gives him the assurance that he will never be deprived of the company of his own spiritual family, whose head, father, and leader, the abbot, is also permanent.

It will be readily understood that this character of stability and perpetuity, which essentially differentiates the monastic order from the mobile forces of the Mendicants, is precisely the condition which is necessary in order that the Benedictine ideal may take shape and attain to its highest development. Many centuries of history bear witness that this monastic order erected on the solid foundation of perpetuity has served the Church in no less degree than has the light equipment of the very active members of the mendicant and clerical ranks. Under this external aspect the history of the spiritual side of monasticism forms an absolutely essential part of that of the Church itself; and students of the sacred Liturgy in particular cannot but be interested in that which monasticism once was and still is, for it desires at all times to be regarded as pre-eminently a *coetus liturgicus*.

As in a work of general character, like the present one, it is not possible to proceed to a thorough examination of monastic action in Europe, it will be better to limit ourselves to the study of a few special points in the history of Roman monasticism, particularly on its liturgical side, treating first of its origin and of the conditions of its development in the capital of the world. The results are of as great interest to the historian as to the liturgist, and are all the more valuable because Roman monasticism, on account of its close connection with the Holy See, and of the very active part which it took in the development of the Liturgy, especially in the early Middle Ages, appears as the most authoritative expression of the cenobitic ideal offered by Rome to the world.

Let us first consider the surroundings and topographical conditions in which Roman monasticism developed. For this purpose, and in order to proceed methodically, we shall keep to the fourteen medieval divisions (n'ont) into which Rome was divided, though they do not always correspond exactly either to the seven ancient ecclesiastical regions administered by the seven regional deacons, or to the fourteen civil regions instituted by Augustus.

Regio I begins at the Lateran patriarchate, and, enclosing within its boundaries the most celebrated basilicas of the citv

—those of the Saviour, the Holy Cross, St Mary Major, St Pudentiana, and St Eudoxia, the *dominicum Clementis,* the titular Church of Pammachius, and many others—it reached northwards as far as the *Alta Semital* and the *Porta Salaria,* eastwards to the *Palatium* and the imperial *Fora* of Nerva and Trajan at its foot, and westwards to the *Licinianum* and the Sessorian Basilica already mentioned. This region therefore comprised the most important and the richest portions of the city.

After the seat of empire had been transferred by Constantine to Byzantium, the centre of interest already established in the first Augustan region of the Porta Capena, at the foot of the Septizonium of Severus, shifted slightly to the east, and there arose in its stead the Lateran *episcopium,* which, with its curial offices, council halls, and basilicas, its colonnades, towers, libraries, baths, monasteries, orphanages, and other charitable institutions, attracted to itself all that was of note in the capital. Many persons of the middle classes must have preferred to live near the *Campus Lateranensis* for economic reasons, or because they were employed in the Curia. Hence that region became one of the most populous of medieval Rome. But apart from the fact that the Papal Curia occupied the ancient Palace of the Laterani and of Fausta, divine Providence seems to have wished to prepare and consecrate that region from the first by endowing it with the most precious memorials and the most venerable monuments of Christian antiquity.

It seems probable that St Paul, whilst he was a prisoner, preached the Gospel to the Romans for two years in the *Castra Peregrina* at the very gates of the *Basilica Salvatoris,* and close to the magnificent palaces of the Valeri, the Anici, and Pammachius. Not far off was the house where Clement, on the morrow of the awful funeral pyres erected under Nero, gathered together the terrified remnant of the flock of Peter, that he might strengthen their faith. Close at hand, too, stood the *domus Pudentiana* or *titulus Pastoris,* together with the papal residence of the second century, with which are connected memories not only of the Apostle Peter, but also of the Acili Glabriones, of Priscilla, of Pius I, of the *Pastor* of Hermas, of Justin, Tatian, and Hippolytus.

Before the bones of any of the martyrs had crossed the sacred boundaries of the city's *pomerium,* beyond which the laws of the Twelve Tables had decreed that the dead should be relegated, an exception to this rule had been made, on two occasions at least, in favour of the Coelian Hill. The first was for the martyrs John and Paul, who were buried on

‘ A road giving its name to *Rtgw VI* of Augustus.—Tr.

the very site of their beheading, in one of the subterranean chambers of their house on the Cœlian. Hence the Leonine Sacramentary, exalting the merits of the two martyrs in the Preface on their feast-day, gives thanks to God that *" etiam in ipsis visceribus Civitatis, sancti Johannis et Pauli victricia membra reconderes."*

The second exception was made in favour of Primus and Felician, the Sabine martyrs of Nomentum, when, after the Lombards had overrun their native land, their bodies were transferred by Pope Theodore I in 648 to the ancient round church of John I (523-26), dedicated to the protomartyr Stephen.

We have already recorded how the pious feelings of the Pontiffs led them to give to the neighbourhood of the Lateran a semi-hieratic character, by reproducing there, as far as possible, the same topographical disposition of the principal sanctuaries of Jerusalem, as, for instance, the *Anastasis,* the *Martyrion* with its two oratories *ante-* and *post-Crucem,* the *Praesepe,* etc. In this reconstruction of Christian Jerusalem at Rome in Regio I the sanctuary of the Ascension, the *Embomon,* of which a block was venerated in the *dominicum Clementis,* was not forgotten, nor even the Eudoxian sanctuary of St Stephen, which had its counterpart, more or less, in the round church near the *Xenodochium Valeri* on the Cœlian.

This reproduction at Rome of the more prominent holy places of Jerusalem made it easier for the papal Liturgy to celebrate on the greater solemnities those striking rites and impressive ceremonies which Etheria on her pilgrimage had so much admired in the ancient capital of the Jews. The processions, the stations at the different basilicas, the singing of the *Alleluia* and the antiphons, are all traditions borrowed from Jerusalem.

These surroundings were thus full of sacred associations for the numerous monks who dwelt at that time in this first region. Only a very narrow valley separated the Cœlian from that other famous hill, the Aventine, on which St Athanasius had formerly inaugurated in the house of Marcella the monastic life at Rome. Near the *Clivus Scauri,* beyond the *Sacra Via* and the Appian Way—the *Regina Viarum*[1]—there still towered up in the seventh century the immense palace of the Petroni Gordiani, recently converted into a monastery at the hands of St Gregory the Great. A little farther away was to be seen the house of Melania and Pinianus, which was of such magnificence that, when it was

[1] So named by Statius.—Tr.

put up to auction, no one was bold enough to come forward and buy it. Farther off still was that of the Valeri, which had first of all been turned into a *Xenodochium* for the poor, and later into a monastery, whence came the monk Adeodatus, who was afterwards chosen as Pope.[1]

In the shadow of the Lateran rose up the monastery of St Paneras, from which in all probability set out the first Apostles of England, who dedicated one of the earliest churches erected in that country to the youthful martyr of only fourteen summers, the titular saint of their own mother house. The true Benedictine tradition was preserved in the Lateran monastery of St Paneras, having been brought thither while the Patriarch and Lawgiver, St Benedict, was, perhaps, still living at Monte Cassino.

In those cloisters of the Lateran and the Cœlian, under those roofs whose classical decorations called to mind the former owners of the place, there still remained in the seventh century the echo of the narratives recounted by Abbots Constantine and Valentinian to Gregory the Great, telling of the most celebrated miracles of their founder. It appeared to be of so much importance to our forefathers in medieval times that the exact place should be known whither the great Pontiff withdrew himself in order to put those pious accounts into writing, that pilgrims to Rome copied in the ancient epigraphic collections the inscription of Agapitus II (946-56), placed in the library of Sant' Andrea at the *Clivus Scauri,* recording that the famous Dialogues of St Gregory had been composed on that spot.

In the *scrinium Lateranense* was preserved, together with the original manuscript of the Antiphonary of St Gregory, the actual weight of bread allowed by St Benedict to his monks, the authentic text of the *Regula,* and other memorials and relics of the saint, whose spiritual rule, confirmed thus by papal sanction, was now about to become the genuine Roman and pontifical form of monastic life throughout Europe.

The papal patriarchate, the sanctuaries and the relics of the martyrs, the classical and sacred memories, the pure and bracing air, the vast and glorious panorama which embraces as in an immense amphitheatre the spurs of the Sabine Appennincs from Soracte's solitary mount as far as Tusculum, and the scanty remains of the temple of Jupiter Latiaris on its lofty height,[2] and farther still down to the deep blue waters of the southern sea at Anxur[3]—each and all contributed to make this enchanted corner of Rome the true Regio I of the capital of the world.

[1] Adeodatus II (672-76).
[2] Monte Cavo.—Tr.
[3] The Volscian name of Terracina.—Tr.

The group of Lateran monasteries, although their position in the immediate vicinity of the papal palace was a very prominent one, represented neither the most ancient nor the most important centre of monastic Rome. The authority of the Vatican monasteries, and the distinction of belonging to the clergy of the basilica of the Prince of the Apostles, were so universally acknowledged in the eighth century that it became almost a traditional law for all later pontifical foundations to conform to their rules. The honour of being the oldest monastery in Rome for men, on the other hand, belongs, apparently, to that one *in Catacumbis* on the Via Appia built by Sixtus III (432-40).

The first time that the *monasterium Lateranense,* known afterwards by the name of St Paneras, appears in history is in a writing of St Gregory the Great (about the year 590) concerning that Abbot Valentinian who ruled it *annis multis,* and who had been a monk at Monte Cassino under St Benedict. When the famous Pontiff wrote the *Dialogues,* Valentinian must have been already dead; doubtless he had died some time previously, so that, even by limiting the duration of these *annis multis* very considerably, it takes us back some twenty-five or thirty years at least—that is, to about 560.

As regards the author of the *Dialogues,* in contradistinction to the later Cassinese tradition gathered by Paul the Deacon, the sack of Monte Cassino under Zoton of Beneventum, and the consequent dispersion of the monks, are things which happened *nuper,* and thus have no relation to the foundation of the Lateran Abbey. The latter was already in existence many years previously—*annis multis*—and there is nothing to prevent us from extending these *annis multis* of Valentinian's rule back to the middle of the sixth century—to about 548, very soon after the death of St Benedict.

The early disciples of the great Patriarch jealously guarded the Benedictine tradition in the monastery of St Paneras at the Lateran, until such time as it spread through the various religious houses of the city. That sacred spot, now long destroyed, was near the ancient sacristy of the Lateran, and, according to a remark in the biography of Gregory III (731-41), it was situated *secus ecclesiam Salvatoris.* In another passage from the biography of Adrian I (772-95) it is stated that, before the latter Pontiff associated the monks of the monastery of Pope Honorius to the psalmody of the Lateran Basilica, those of St Paneras filled this office alone and occupied both sides of the choir. The very title, indeed, of *monasterium Lateranense,* given to it by St Gregory, would suffice to prove that the *coenobium* of St Paneras existed before there was any other abbey to rival it.

l *Dialog. S. Gregorii,* lib. II, c. i.

The history of this monastery of St Paneras is entirely unknown through want of documents. Contrary to the assertion of Paul the Deacon, the Lateran monks could hardly have taken part in the restoration of Monte Cassino under Abbot Petronax, both because the sources quoted by the Cassinese chronicler seem to contradict each other in this regard, and because at that time the monastery of St Paneras had already fallen from its pristine splendour and had neither a regular rule nor any revenues.

Gregory III, being desirous of raising it from this neglected condition, set its finances in order and established therein a new monastic community under the rule of an abbot, with the obligation to sing the divine Office in the Basilica of the Saviour by day and by night. These new monks of St Paneras made no claim to be the direct descendants of the first disciples of St Benedict who took refuge in Rome after the burning of Monte Cassino, so that when Pope Zachary (741-52) wished to restore the original copy of the *Regula* to the Cassinese *scrinium,* they raised no objection, and further, having no local monastic traditions, they adopted those which existed in the Vatican monasteries, as the *Liber Pontificalis* expressly states.[1]

L'ke the greater part of the famous monasteries in Rome attached to basilicas, St Paneras also fell a prey to the spirit of dissolution which towards the tenth century changed some sixty abbeys within the city walls into as many canonical chapters. At the Lateran, indeed, the collapse must have come some years earlier, for whilst the monasteries of St Paul, St Agnes, and St Andrew on the *Clivus Scauri* were included in the reform of the Roman religious houses begun by St Odo of Cluny and Alberic about 936, those around the Lateran remained entirely apart from this reforming movement. Thus it was in the very place where, for the first time in Rome, perhaps even during the lifetime of St Benedict himself, his *Regula* had been inaugurated, that it first failed.

Of the *monasterium Honorii,* dedicated to the Apostles Andrew and Bartholomew, there still remains, though many times thoroughly restored, the little church opposite the ancient door of the hospital of St John. It had once been the paternal mansion of Pope Honorius I (625-38), who, converting it into a monastery, assigned to it a substantial patrimony, whence the abbey continued to be known among the people by the name of its original owner rather than by that of the two saints, without troubling themselves in an/ way about the *damnatio memoriae* of Honorius decreed by the Council of Constantinople.

[1] Duchesne, I, 419.

A century and a half later Pope Adrian found the community in such a deplorable condition that he decided to carry out a radical reform. He therefore formed a new monastic community under the rule of an abbot, and at the same time he entrusted to it a share in the duty of singing the Office in the Lateran Basilica. For this reason the choir of the *Basilica Salvatoris* was divided into two parts; the one was reserved to the monks of St Paneras, and the other to those of the monastery of Honorius.[1]

According to the *Liber Pontificalis*,[2] Pope Hilary (461-68) had already built near the baptistery of the Lateran a monastery dedicated to St Stephen, which in later times, chiefly at the instance of St Gregory the Great, was turned into a regular orphanage or *Schola Cantorum,* mentioned in papal documents down to the time of Urban V (1362-70). The monks, however—if indeed they ever inhabited it—could not have done so for very long, as in the eighth century the school of pontifical singers had already become an institution of a purely musical character, under the management of arch-cantors, paraphonists, and deans, without any monastic charge or direction.

The monastery dedicated to the two Eastern martyrs, Sergius and Bacchus, was originally inhabited by nuns, and stood near the Lateran aqueduct. It is mentioned for the first time under Leo III (795-816).[3] Later on Paschal I (817-24), finding it in great financial difficulties, removed the few remaining nuns to another house, and, having adequately endowed it, introduced there a community of monks, making it, as usual, incumbent on them to take their part in carrying out the daily Office in the Lateran Basilica.[4] This duty was therefore no longer performed by a single monastic choir, but by three, in addition to the *schola* of the orphan choristers.

On the opposite side of the *Campus Lateranensis,* near the Sessorian palace, commonly called *Sancta Hierusalem,* there arose also, towards the beginning of the eleventh century, a monastery which Leo IX (1049-54) granted for a time to the monks of Monte Cassino.[5] The tradition which attributes its foundation to Benedict VIII (1012-24) is a very doubtful one; moreover, the monks did not long remain there, for Pope Alexander II (1061-73) gave it to the Canons Regular.[6]

On the eastern extremity of the Coelian Hill, near the round Church of St Stephen, there were discovered a few years ago the foundations of the *Xenodochium* of the Valeri, which as early as the seventh century had been turned into a monastery'

[1] *Lib. Pontif.,* I, 506.
[2] *Of. cit.,* II
[3] Cf. *Reg. Poxtif. Roni , IL,* 4165.
[4] *Of. cit.,* I, 245
[5] *Of.* a*/.*, II, 58.
[6] *op cit.,* 4725.

dedicated to St Erasmus of Formia.[1] It should be noted in passing· that these various foreign saints, having through the influence of the monks been adopted at Rome, received also the honour of being inserted in the Roman Liturgy. Pope Adeodatus II (672-76), who had been brought up at St Erasmus, restored the house and also added to its patrimony. In 938, in the time of Leo VII, the monastery was handed over to the monks of Subiaco.[2]

The monastery of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs still rises up majestically on the eastern slope of the Coelian, on the side, that is, which looks towards the *domus aurea* of Nero, with the Baths of Titus and of Trajan above it. This was one of the last monasteries to be founded in medieval Rome, being erected by Paschal II about the year 1116, after he had repaired the ruin at this spot consequent on the conflagration originated by Robert Guiscard.[3] The monastery of St Clement, on the other hand, seems to be far older, standing as it does where the *dominicum* of the fourth century preserved the memory of the private dwelling of the saint at the foot of the Coelian Hill.

On the pleasant stretch of level ground on the Esquiline, between the Flavian Amphitheatre and the titular Church of St Eudoxia, was situated the monastery of *Sancta Maria in Monasterio,* which some authorities would identify with the *coenobium* of St Agapitus *ad Vincula,* others with *Sancta Maria de Lutara,* both of which are mentioned as also existing under Leo III. A document of Farfa of the eleventh century speaks of a certain *Petrus abbas Monasterii sanctae Mariae ante venerabilem titulum Eudoxiae,*[5] and, indeed, in the sixteenth century the remains of this monastery were still to be seen exactly opposite the porch of the above-named basilica.

St Basil, also, who did so much to foster the growth of monasticism in Pontus, had a monastery dedicated to him in Rome, near the Forum of Nerva. It was called *in scala mortuorum,* and still exists under the title of the Annunciation. The first time we find it mentioned is in the year 955/ but, in spite of its comparatively late foundation, it attained to such great fame that it was reckoned amongst the most celebrated of the Roman abbeys.

Along the *Sacra Via,* on the north side of the Forum, the ancient temple of Faustina and Antoninus was also converted, towards the eighth century, into a Christian church and dedicated to St Lawrence. Afterwards a monastery was

‘ Kerr. *Italia Pontif.,* I, 43-4.
» *Lib Pont.,* II, 305.
* Cf. *Rtg Farf..* III, doc 492. pp. 199-202.
• CÎ. *Rtg. Pontif. Rom. IL,* 3669.
‘ Cf. *Rtg. Pontif. Rom. IL,* 3608.
4 *Op. cil.,* II, 41, note 63 ; II, 25.

established there, and mention is often made of it in the documents of the adjacent diaconal church of *Sancta Maria Nova* on the *summa Sacra Via,* between the temple of Venus and Rome and the triumphal arch of Titus, at the foot of the Palatine. This diaconal church, built to take the place of *Sancta Maria Antiqua,* then in an unsafe condition, was in later times given to the monks of the Congregation of Monte Oliveto (1352), who still occupy it.

Less certain is the foundation of a convent under Abbess Flora, which, according to a *praeceptum* of Gregory I to the subdeacon Gratiosus in January, 593, was to be effected by adapting to this purpose an ancient private dwelling-house in Regio IV, *ad gallinas albas,* near the Quirinal. The subdeacon is again mentioned under Honorius I, but as there is no further reference to this convent, it is probable that the project was never carried out.[1]

Near the neighbouring *Titulus Pastoris* on the Viminal, in the houses where, in the second century, the *Episcopium,* with the *Didascaleion* of Hermas and of Justin, and the *domus martyris Hippolythi,* once had its seat, a peaceful choir of monks in the seventh century succeeded the Popes, the doctors, and the antipopes who had argued about the "monarchy" and the Blessed Trinity. In the time of Leo III they served two small oratories dedicated to St Michael and to St Euphemia—the Byzantine martyr in whose basilica was held the Council of Chalcedon—mention being first made of them during the life of Sergius I (687-701).[2]

The *Liber Pontificalis* speaks of them as being *intra titulum Pudentis,* but in reality the ancient presbyteral title, being in the hands of the local clergy, did not come under monastic influence, and in the early plans of Rome it is noticeable that the site of those two little churches was somewhat farther to the east of the basilica—that is, on the opposite side of the actual road.

Of the origin of the Abbey of San Lorenzo *Formoso,* or *in Formoso,* one of the most important in Rome, we are still in ignorance. We only know that about the year 1150 it was in great need of reformation; so much so that Eugenius III soon afterwards granted the monastery to the monks of Cava dei Tirreni, as is seen in a Bull of Alexander III (1159-81).[3]

The monastery of Sta Agata dei Goti, whose basilica, adorned with splendid mosaics, recalled the very important period of the domination of the Arian Goths in Rome, dates only from the eighth century, when it had already become a rule that the ancient basilicas without titular clergy should

[1] *Episf.*. lib. III, ep. 17 ; *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 617.
[2] *Ltb. Pontif.,* II, 24.
[3] *Reg, Pont. Rom. IL,* 1x590.

be entrusted to monks. It is therefore contemporary with the other monastery of St Martin at the *Titulus Aequitii*—one of the oldest of the Roman titles—near which Leo IV *coenobium sacrum statuit monachosque locavit.* A famous inscription, commemorating- the restorations in that church carried out by Sergius II (844-47) and Leo IV (847-55), bears witness to this.[1] The monastery belonged to monks who had come originally from the East.

Not very far from there was the abbey which from the ninth century was dedicated to the Eastern martyrs Sergius and Bacchus—the *Canelicum,* where the Ruthenian College now stands—the second to bear this dedication in Regio I. Founded when monastic life in Rome was already on the decline, this monastery, notwithstanding the great fame which its holy patrons enjoyed in the East, never attained in the West to much importance, so in the eleventh century it had become a mere dependency of the Abbey of St Paul.

After the group of Lateran monasteries, of much more note than those which we have enumerated so far, were the monasteries on the Esquiline surrounding the *Basilica Sicinini,* afterwards known as the *Liberiana.* or *Major.* Of these there were no fewer than six, but some of them very soon disappeared, such as the *Boethianum,*[2] whence Pope Donus I3 (676-78) expelled the Syrian monks, who were infected with Nestorianism, and replaced them by Roman monks; and that other one *ad lunam,*[4] erected by Pope Hilary, which is never again heard of in history.

The other four monasteries on the Esquiline, St Agnes *ad duo furna,s* St Andrew *in Exaiulo*[6]—celebrated for a famous homily preached there by St Gregory the Great—the *Anargyri* martyrs SS Cosmas and Damian,[7] and, lastly, St Adrian—another Oriental—and St Lawrence,[8] having been restored several times by the Popes, especially by Gregory II (715-31) and Adrian I, flourished until the tenth century, when, the fervour of monastic observance having relaxed, they gradually came to lead the ordinary canonical life. St Agnes, or rather St Praxedes, alone remained, where Paschal I had already introduced Greek monks,[9] who were succeeded some centuries after[10] by monks of the Vallombrosan Congregation, under whose care the church still remains.

Adjoining the Arch of Gallienus, off the Via Merulana, which connects the Basilica of St Mary Major with the Lateran, rose the monastery of St Vitus *ad lunam.* The

1 Kerr, *op. cit.,* I 46
* Also written Domnwj.
» C/. Kerr, *Op. at.,* 1, 53.
' *Of', cit.,* I, 397.
• Kerr, *op. cit.,* I, 49.
' *Lib. Pont.,* I, iii, 348.
* *Op. cit,* I, 245.
* *Lib. Pont.,* I, 397.
* *Op. cit.,* I, 511.
10 In 1198.—Tr.

titular saints of all these churches have left their mark on the Roman Liturgy, which from the eighth century has celebrated the feast of the patron saints of the basilicas and monasteries, whether Roman or not. This *coenobium* is mentioned as early as the pontificate of Stephen III.[1] Later on, after the death of Paul I (767), the monk Philip was elected here as antipope, but fortunately the next day, seeing that the affairs of his party were taking a bad turn, he left the patriarchal palace and went back quietly to his own monastery.

Some authorities have endeavoured to identify this monastery of St Vitus with the one *ad lunam* mentioned above, built by Pope Hilary. This suggestion, however, has not been borne out, for there could easily have been two separate monasteries in the region *ad lunam,* just as there were four *in Vaticano* and three *in Lateranis.*

At a little distance from the Liberian Basilica stood the convent of St Bibiana,[2] with a very ancient church erected in the fifth century by Pope Simplicius near the villa and *nymphaeum* of Licinius. About the year 683 Leo II brought thither from the cemetery of Generosa, *ad sextum Philippi,* on the Via Portuensis, where had once been the seat of the *Fratres Arvali,* the bodies of the martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus, and Viatrix, from whom the convent afterwards took its name.

Documents of a very late period refer to another monastery near the *titulus Eusebii,* which Nicholas IV[3] granted in 1288 to San Pietro di Morrone, the future Celestine V. We have, however, no information concerning the origin of this religious house.

Altogether the first region of medieval Rome comprised about five-and-twenty monasteries, without counting either the smaller religious houses dependent on them, which are not mentioned in the papal documents, or the monasteries founded after the twelfth century; that is to say, when the golden period of Benedictine history in Rome had already declined.

The disproportion between the numbers of the convents and that of the monasteries in this region is very remarkable. Only three out of twenty-four religious houses belonged to nuns, the cause of this being the poverty to which Rome was reduced in the early Middle Ages, a condition much aggravated in the case of the female communities, as they were unable either to develop their lands or to defend them from the greed of those who laid claim to them.

[1] *Lib. Pont.,* I 470. [2] Kerr, *op. cit.,* I, 38. [3] *Op. at .* I, 39

Regio II was very much smaller than Regio I, and included, besides the Quirinal and Pincian hills, that lower part of the Eternal City which is contained in the valley that stretches between the Forum of Trajan, the Flaminian *porticus,* and the column of Antoninus in the Campus Martius. The Christian memories in this district are certainly less numerous and less famous than those surrounding the Lateran, yet it possesses some very ancient sacred monuments—as, for instance, the venerable titular Church of Marcellus, dating from the beginning of the fourth century, and the *Apostoleion* of Pelagius I (555-60) and of Narses, where some relics of the Apostles Philip and James were deposited in the pontificate of John III (560-73).

The *Liber Pontificalis,* in the biography of Leo III, speaks of a monastery directly behind the apse of this basilica, bearing the name of *Sancti Andreae de biberatica ;* perhaps because the locality near the ancient *Porta Fontinalis* of the Servian wall was especially rich in springs of water. The nuns of St Andrew formerly had the care of the lambs from whose fleece was destined to be woven the *pallia* conferred by the Pope on patriarchs and metropolitans. This privilege has now devolved on the convent of St Cecilia. Within the convent of St Andrew was an oratory dedicated to St Thomas, of which mention is made in the biography of Stephen V, who presented it with a hanging for the altar.

A tiny little church in this second region, dedicated to the memory' of the celebrated doctor Hippolytus, is included in the ancient lists of the city churches. We know, indeed, that another convent was attached to it, but how or when the church arose, and why it was abandoned, is not recorded. This must already have taken place in the sixteenth century, as the oratory was then destroyed.[1]

Towards the middle of the tenth century the sisters of Adalbert the Consul founded near the Basilica of Sta Maria *in Via Lata* a third convent, dedicated to St Cyriacus,[2] which, through its influence and its extensive property in the Roman Campagna, was reckoned as one of the most important in medieval Rome. Its archives, which are now added to those belonging to the Chapter of the neighbouring Basilica of Sta Maria, are amongst the most ancient and most interesting of those which concern the history of the Roman Duchy.

Ancient documents also speak of a convent in that neighbourhood called *Sancti Salvatoris ad duos amantes,* belonging to the nuns of St Cyriacus but this may have been merely a dependent house, having no separate existence and history of its own.

[1] Armellini, *Lt Chitst di Roma,* II. Edit., 262-3.
[2] Kerr, *op. cil.,* I, 79 *iq.* · Martinelli. *Primo trofeo della Croce,* 108.

To sum up, we find only three or four religious houses in the second region, and these exclusively for women, and of a somewhat later foundation ; the reason of this being that in this district there were not many basilicas of martyrs to be served, and in those few the urban clergy strove jealously to maintain their own traditional rights.

Regio III lay between the Campus Martius, the *collis hortorum in Pincis,* the Fta *Lata,* and a spur of the Quirinal, and comprised, therefore, in its circumference the lowest and least distinguished part of the city, whose more aristocratic life centred round the ancient *fora* and the Palatine. Moreover, the Christian monuments which adorn this district are very limited in number, chiefly because all basilicas used as the burial-places of martyrs, like all other tombs, were obliged by law to be outside the city boundaries. Furthermore, the urban titular churches, being nearly all of them set up in the *domus* of the patrician owners, who had made a gift of them to the Church, these *domus* were naturally not to be found as a rule in a part of the city pre-eminently inhabited by the populace.

Consequently the only monastery in this district is one in honour of SS Stephen, Dionysius, and Sylvester *Kata Pauli,* begun by Stephen II, but dedicated later by his brother Paul I, in his own house. In order to encourage greater devotion to the monastery which he had founded, the Pontiff enriched it with a number of bodies of martyrs, which he transferred thither from the extra-mural cemeteries, these being considered to be no longer secure.[1] The same Pontiff joined to this Roman abbey another much older abbey—that of St Sylvester on Mount Soracte, which King Pepin had granted to him. Hence this new monastery, favoured and enriched by the Popes and by the Frankish kings, who looked upon it as a kind of votive memorial of their alliance with the Papacy, attained in a short time to great renown. At first it was inhabited by Greek monks, but afterwards these were succeeded by Benedictines.

Regio IV, almost uninhabited in the Middle Ages, and given over to vineyards and gardens, consisted chiefly of the Campus Martius, with only one religious house, a convent of Greek nuns, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and St Gregory Nazianzen.[2] It seems, indeed, as though its first inception coincided with that movement of monastic emigration from the East, occasioned by the iconoclastic persecution which

[1] Kerr, *op. cit.,* I, 8r.

[2] Kerr, *op. cit.*. I. 86-7.

permeated the Byzantine world. The oratory of St Gregory *quod ponitur in Campo Martis* is mentioned in the biography of Leo III, but the history of the beginnings *of* the monastery, which afterwards became very rich and the possessor of most important archives, is still obscure.

Regio V took its name from the magnificent bridge which connects the mausoleum of the Emperor Hadrian[1] with the city. This monument was converted during the Middle Ages into a *castrum* of exceptional importance, as being the place in which the Popes, from Gregory VII to Clement VII, usually sought safety when abandoning the Vatican at the more critical moments of their reign. It was by means of this bridge of Hadrian, called after him the *pons Aelius,* that the Vatican and the Leonine city were reached from the rest of Rome, for during the whole of the Middle Ages this district always remained outside the circuit of the city walls.

It happened, indeed, more than once that, when an emperor or a prince with his armed followers was permitted to approach in order to venerate the tomb of St Peter, the gates of the Eternal City were closed at the same time for fear of a hostile attack on their part. Consequently the fifth region, in close proximity to the Tiber, which constantly overflowed its banks in the winter-time, with its *posterulae,*[2] its mills, and its wretched hovels, as they existed up to thirty years ago, truly represented the very lowest part of the city, the furthest from the centre and from the more aristocratic quarters of the capital.

The Greek monastery of St Andrew and St Lucy, called also (perhaps after its founder) *Renati,* has, after much hesitation, been placed by Duchesne near the churches of Santa Lucia *della Tinta* and of St Andrea *de Marmorariis,* not far from the *Scorticlaria* and the Stadium of Alexander Severus.[3] Gregory I often mentions its Abbot Probus, to whom he entrusted important commissions. In course of time the Greek monks were succeeded by Latins. Leo III enriched the monastery with gifts, but after the tenth century it wholly disappeared.

Another famous abbey in this region was that *ad caput seccutae* dedicated to St Blaise, but we know nothing as to its foundation. Probably it did not go further back than the eighth century, when emigration from the East gave a great impetus to the *cultus of* Oriental saints in Rome. The Church of St Blaise was reconsecrated by Alexander II in

[1] *i.t.,* the Castello Sant' Angelo.
[2] Lat *posltrula,* a small backdoor or postern.—Tr.
[3] Kerr, *of>. cti.,* I, 89.

1072 «^fter Abbot Dominic had restored it and enriched it with numerous relics,1 which proves that the first basilica must have been much more ancient.

Regio VI did not possess a single religious house, whereas Regio VII, although poor and squalid and adjacent to the Tiber, as it was not without ancient Christian memories, could boast of several monasteries, which, though not large, were of a certain importance. A tradition pointed to this spot as the place where St Paul had carried out a vast work of propaganda and conversion amongst the Jews of the Trastevere. History ignores these legends, but the number and antiquity of the sacred buildings which in the early Middle Ages adorned the region of the Arenula made it one of the most characteristic of medieval Rome.

First of all comes the little monastery *Sancti Salvatoris de Campo,* or *de Deo Campo, One Campo,* or *Domni Campo.* Archaeologists have always considered this title to be a kind of *rebus,* and they have endeavoured to evolve the name, corrupted by amanuenses, from all sorts of curious derivations. As a matter of fact, it simply refers to a certain *domnus Campo,* a famous Abbot of Farfa, who erected or restored that monastery about the first half of the tenth century.2

St Stephen *de Benedictinis,3* now known as St Bartholomew, also shows marks of a somewhat late origin, as does that other monastery of St Benedict *in Cacabis,*1 which was situated a little distance off, close to the Ghetto of the Jews. These lesser monasteries were, perhaps, merely urban *grangiae,s* dependent on the great imperial Abbey of Farfa *in Sabina,* like the neighbouring *coenobium* of St Martin,® which in its turn depended from another imperial and Sabine monastery—that of San Salvatore *in montibus Reatinis.7*

In all probability these urban houses depending from Lombardo-Sabine monasteries do not date further back than the tenth century, when, the Saracens having invaded the Sabine country and set fire to Farfa and San Salvatore, a number of the monks took refuge in Rome.

1 Armeilini, *op. cit.,* 355.

‘ Schuster, *L'abbate Ugo I e la riforma di Farfa,* p. 15, note 3, Perugia, 191Î.

• Armeilini, *op. cit.,* 399.

‘ *Op. cit.,* 402.

‘ *Grangia,* a neo-Latin word, signifying a grange or farm, attached to the larger monasteries.—Tr .

• *Op. cit.,* 402 3.

’ Schuster, *Il monastero imperiale del Salvatore sul monte Letenano,* in Arch, R. Soc. Rom. Stor. Pair., vol. xxxvii, p. 436.

Of greater importance seems to have been the monastery of St Benedict *in Arenula,*[1] between the Tiber and San Salvatore *in domni Campo,* which, according to Camerarius, received six *denarii* as a *presbyterium* on the occasion of solemn papal processions. We find it named among the twenty privileged abbeys of Rome, whose abbots had their special places at the pontifical stations.

It seems that as early as the eighth century there existed also in this quarter of the city a monastic hospice for Irish pilgrims *(i.e.,* Scots), which later became the monastery of S. *Trinitatis Scottorum.*[2] It is noted by' Camerarius as receiving a *presbyterium* of two *soldi* on the occasion of papal processions.

We do not find in this seventh region any celebrated basilicas or famous monasteries, but only *grangiae* belonging to " foreign " abbeys, *of very* great use, no doubt, to those monks who through them acquired a certain influence in the Curia, though they are of scarcely any interest for the history of the Eternal City.

To Regio VIII was given the name of *Scorticlaria,* because of the evil-smelling tanneries which in the Middle Ages occupied the whole district between the Stadium of Severus and the Pantheon of Agrippa.

A letter of Gregory the Great in 596 speaks of a monastery which was to be founded in this quarter, in houses belonging to a certain priest called John, near the Baths of Agrippa. The abbot who was to take the new community under his jurisdiction had already been nominated, but for some unknown reason the whole plan fell through. Three years having elapsed and nothing having been done, the Pope entrusted the new foundation to Abbess Bona, but after that it is never mentioned again in the Roman documents.[3]

Not very far from there, behind the Basilica of St Eustachius, there stretched, in the tenth century, the extensive properties of the Abbey of Farfa in the Lombard quarter of the city. These included, first and foremost, its *Celia Major* with the dependent Churches of St Mary, St Benedict, St Stephen, the Holy Saviour, and St Blaise, near the palace of the Crescenzi.

The famous imperial abbey in the Sabina never exercised any real influence on monasticism in Rome itself, but, at a time when power and influence derived from territorial possessions had come to be a necessary expression of moral and religious prestige, it is easy to understand the political sig-

[1] Armellini. *op. cit.,* 408. [2] *op. tit.,* 413
[3] *Epist.,* lib. III., Ep. 37, *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 633-34.

nificance attached to the independence of this stronghold of Farfa and to the immunity which it enjoyed under the protection of the imperial eagle. In consequence of this historical and privileged position, this region retained, almost down to our own days, the name of *platea Langobarda;* in fact, even in the sixteenth century it was to a great extent inhabited by German colonists. It is well known, indeed, that the monks of Farfa, according to their earliest traditions, used to avail themselves of the Lombard Codex, even in Rome itself, before the tribunals of the Curia. Thus this *platea Langobarda,* in its dealings with the two local powers of the Capitol and the Curia, with difficulty concealed the hidden significance of the political independence of which the abbey boasted.[1]

The convent dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and to the Persian martyr Anastasius *de Julia* is mentioned as far back as the time of Leo III. It stood at a short distance from the *theatrum* of Pompey, and, after passing through the hands of a succession of nuns, Templars, and sisterhoods, ended by becoming a charitable institution.[2]

Regio IX received its name from a *pinea;* not, however, that colossal pine-cone of gilded bronze whereof Dante speaks,[3] which, after having crowned the summit of the mausoleum of Hadrian, was eventually in the Middle Ages placed on the piazza in front of the Vatican Basilica.[4]

The most important sacred building in this quarter of the city was undoubtedly the ancient Basilica of St Mark *in Pallacine,* built by Pope Marcus (337-40), in which, by order of Adrian I, the monks of the two neighbouring monasteries of St Lawrence and of St Stephen *in Vaganda* daily celebrated the divine Office.

The position of this latter abbey is still uncertain. Some authorities have identified it, not without reason, with the existing Church of Santo Stefano del Cacco,[5] whilst others would place it at the very' foot of the *Capitolium.* Its origin was certainly of some importance, since the mosaic in the apse of the basilica showed Paschal I with a model of the church in his hand.

St Lawrence, near the *balnea pallacina* (the spot where the murder took place of which Sixtus Roscius was accused), was at a very short distance from the *Titulus de Pallacine,*[6] *now* the Church of St Mark, and was destroyed in the sixteenth century.

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[1] *Cf.* Schuster. *L'abbate Ugo I,* etc., pp. 28 *tqq.*

[2] Armellini, *op. cit.,* 447.

[3] *Inferno* xxxi, 59.

[4] Now in the Vatican Gardens.—Tr.

[5] Kerr, *op. cit.,* 101.

[6] Lib. 507

Regio X began at the *Porticus Octaviae,* and, going from the neighbouring deaconry of Galla Patricia *(Sancta Maria in Porticu)* up the *Capitolium,* it included the Forum and part of the Via Appia, reaching thence as far as the Porta Latina. It thus formed one of the largest, most central, and most thickly populated districts of Rome, and it seemed as though Providence had willed to blot out the many memories and monuments of the former greatness of the idolatrous city by raising up churches and monasteries in their stead.

On the eastern slope of the Cœlian, near the classical *Caput Africae* and the Basilica of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs, on the native soil of that very hill with which the memory of the early years of monachism in Rome was bound up, rose the convent dedicated to St Agatha. Documents prove that it existed down to the time of Honorius HI (1216-27) ;x later the nuns were removed thence, some of them being transferred to St Bibiana and the rest to St Sixtus.

A similar fate befell the Abbey of St Thomas *in Formis,*2 the ruins of which may still be seen on the Cœlian, between the Arch of Dolabella and the *formae* of the Claudian aqueduct.3 The number of monks having much diminished, Innocent III replaced them by the friars of the newly founded Trinitarian Order, who were succeeded in its possession by the Vatican Chapter.

From St Thomas, going in the direction of the *titulus Bizanlis* (SS John and Paul), and descending by the Clivus Scauri to the *Sacra Via* which intersects the narrow valley separating the Cœlian from the Aventine, we leave on our right the *Septizonium Severi,* its huge shadow falling upon the Circus Maximus. In this very neighbourhood, filled with the most glorious memories of imperial Rome, stood the house of the *defensor* Gordianus, afterwards converted by his son, Gregory the Great, into a monastery dedicated to St Andrew the Apostle.4

In order to enter more fully into the monastic intention of the founder of this religious house, it is very necessary to bear in mind the circumstance that it was situated in one of the most aristocratic and populous quarters of the Eternal City. There this monastery was suitably adapted within the magnificent halls of the patrician *domus,* with its *nymphaeum,* its *impluvium,* and its fountain, and perhaps also with the traditional *imagines majorum*5 in the *atrium,* where

‘ Armellini, *op. cit.,* 504.

· *Idem.*

* *i.e.,* the extension oi the Claudian aqueduct built by Nero on the Cœlian.—Tr .

4 C/. Kerr. *op. cit.,* », 103 *sqq.*

4 Usually made of wax and borne in funeral processions ; at first they were masks, and later busts.—Tr .

Gregory, after he had become Pope, caused his own portrait and those of his parents to be painted.

On the opposite hill, in the deserted galleries of the *Palatium,* a monastery arose during the Byzantine period, dedicated to St Cesarius,[1] whose *cultus* was intended by its founders to replace that of the *divi Caesares,* who from that very spot had once ruled the world. Some Oriental monks continued to live there at least until the twelfth century ; then, the Byzantine schism being complete, the sources of Greek monasticism at Rome ran dry, and the monastery was entirely deserted.

A happier lot was that of the other religious house of St Mary or St Sebastian *in Pallara,* founded in the first half of the tenth century by a certain doctor of medicine named Peter, on the site which an ancient tradition pointed out as that where the martyrdom of the famous soldier-saint had taken place. Upon the death of Paschal II a conclave was held there, in which Gelasius II (i 118-19), one of the most unfortunate of the Popes, was elected. The Frangipani family, who were opposed to him, seized him a few moments after his election, and imprisoned him in their house, which adjoined the Arch of Titus.

In the eleventh century the monastery of Peter the Doctor belonged to the monks of Monte Cassino. The basilica was also sacred to the martyr Zoticus, because during his lifetime he had, according to his *Acta,* held an important post in the neighbouring *Palatium.*

On the Via Appia, at the point where the Via Latina branches off to the left, there existed another convent, likewise dedicated to St Cesarius *de Corsas.*[2] Under Leo IV, however, this convent was joined to that of St Simitrius, which stood close by. 1 he *coenobium* of St Simitrius is one of the most ancient religious houses in Rome, and was originally occupied by monks. A letter of St Gregory the Great, written in July, 599, records a certain *Fortunatus abbas Sancti Simitrii,* but we do not know either for what reason or at what date nuns took the place of monks.[3]

A third community of nuns lived in this vicinity—that of Sta Maria *in Tern puli*[4]—to whom Leo III made an offering of sacred vessels for their private oratory, which was dedicated to St Agatha. Honorius III united these three communities in one convent, in order to give place to St Dominic and his new foundation of Friars Preachers.

As on the *Regina viarum* and on the *Palatium,* so also in the *Forum,* the dragon—the symbol of idolatry—had, from the earliest centuries of the Middle Ages, been overcome and

[1] *Op. cit.,* i, 103.
[2] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 120.
[3] *Lib. Pontif.,* ii. 24.
[4] *Op. cit.,* i, 121-22.

held in bonds by a closely linked chain of churches and monasteries. We have already named those of San Lorenzo in Miranda and Santa Maria Nova; we must also mention on the opposite side, at the very foot of the Palatine, actually, indeed, within the halls of the ancient *bibliotheca* of Augustus, the Greek monastery of *Sta Maria Antiqua*.[1] Within recent years a great part of this latter monastery has been brought to light, with its eighth-century decorations, its representations of the crucifixion, and its long lines of Byzantine and Roman saints painted on the walls of the basilica.

On the fateful *Capitolium* itself, where, in the Middle Ages, vines and herbs covered over with a green mantle the ruins of the ancient sovereign of the world, a community of Greek monks settled itself peacefully beside the sanctuary of Capitoline Jove, being succeeded by Latin monks down to 1250, when these in their turn gave place to the Friars Minor.[2] Many documents still exist concerning this famous Abbey of Sta Maria in *Capitolio,* which claimed that its records could be traced as far back as Constantine the Great, and even further to Octavian Augustus. In the later Middle Ages the Capitoline Basilica became the municipal church, as it were, of the *Senatus Populusque Romanus.*

We have, then, in this tenth region at least ten religious houses, of which four were convents and the others Greek or Latin monasteries, without counting the *grangiae* and the smaller houses depending from "foreign" abbeys. This striking number of abbeys in the most important quarter of the city is very remarkable, and shows us that the descendants of the early hermits of the Thebaid not only did not fear to take up their abode in the crowded Forum, but even ascended to the Palatine and the Capitol, and there pitched their peaceful tents in the very halls of the Cæsars and *Pontifices* of ancient Rome.

Regio XI was named from the Basilica of St Angelo *in porticu Octaviae,* and must be regarded as being the most populous district of the *plebs romana* at the time of Cola di Rienzi. It comprised that part of the city which extends from the foot of the Capitol and the Tarpeian Rock towards the *Theatrum Marcelli,* the Licaonia Island,[3] and the Tiber. It was a thickly populated district, and in the Middle Ages, when the centre of the communal life of Rome was displaced

[1] *Cf.* V. Federici, S *Maria antiqua e gli ultimi scavi,* in Arch. R. Soc. Rom. Stor. Patr., xxiii, 517.

[2] Kerr, *op. cil.,* i, 101 *sqq.*

[3] The modern Isola di San Bartolommeo.—Tr.

and was moved from the *Forum* to *Elephantum erbarium,* which was the ancient name given by the people to the vegetable market near St Nicholas in Carcere, several noble families—the Pierleoni and the *filii Ursae* or Orsini amongst others—built their family palaces in this part of the city.

Almost in the centre of this region, and not far from the ruins of the Flaminian *porticus,* stood the celebrated convent *sanctae Mariae Ambrosii,* whom some have identified without hesitation as being the famous Archbishop of Milan of the same name. It is a fact, certified by historians, that St Ambrose, who was brought up and educated in Rome, had there his ancestral *domus,* which was frequented by the Pope himself; indeed, De Rossi believed that he had discovered the family burial-place of the saint on the Via Appia. It is also certain that the memories of St Ambrose in this place date back to early times, since the *Liber Pontificalis* records the gifts which Leo III presented to this oratory.[1] There is then nothing which renders improbable the tradition that we have here a genuine record of St Ambrose's sojourn in this spot. The house was doubtless converted into an oratory very soon after the death of the saint, when it was not as yet permissible to dedicate it to him, so his name was added only as being that of the founder of the sanctuary. Thus one spoke of *Sancta Maria Ambrosii,* just as of San Lorenzo in Lucina, San Lorenzo in Damaso, or the monastery of Boethius, of Honorius, etc.

Regio XII, called after the *ripa* of the medieval port on the Tiber, was exceedingly rich in churches and monasteries, and took in, besides the Aventine, the entire plain opposite the Trastevere, from the *duo pontes* of the Licaonia Island as far as the *Janus* of the Velabrum and the *Circus Maximus.* By reason of the port on the Tiber, and of the two chief branches of the river which connected the capital with Ostia, Portus Romanus, and the sea, this region assumed, from the time of the Empire, such a cosmopolitan character that Eastern institutions and foundations abounded here more than anywhere else.

It was on the Aventine that Athanasius of Alexandria, the guest of the widowed Marcella, laid the first foundations of monastic life in Rome. In the seventh century the monks of the λαύραl of St Sabbas, who had fled from Jerusalem when driven from their own country by the Arabs, established themselves in the vicinity of the house of Marcella, on the

[1] Armellini, *op. cit,,* 564-65.

[2] In a *taunt* the monks lived as solitaries under the control of an abbot in separate small houses in a sort of village, such as may be seen at the Certosa outside Pavia and in other places.—Tk.

hillside of the pseudo-Aventine which overlooks the Baths of Caracalla. Sergius, the Metropolitan of Damascus in the tenth century, when ousted from his see by the infidels, also came to seek a refuge on the Aventine. St Odo, too, and St Odilo of Cluny, the Abbots of Vendôme, St Dominic with his first companions—all elected to make their dwelling-place on this classic hill, which by its solitude and quiet was the best suited to the religious life, and at the same time the most international part of the city of the *Septimontium*.

The Greek Abbey of St Prisca, on the eastern slope of the Aventine,[1] stands upon the site of a patrician *domus* which some archeologists have not hesitated to connect with Aquila and Priscilla, the disciples of St Paul, with the family of Pudens, and with the Acili Glabriones, who were the first among the Roman nobles to receive the Gospel preached to them by St Peter. Near by there was also, when Leo III was Pope, a monaster}· named after St Donatus,[2] but it soon became merged in that of St Prisca.

We know nothing of the convent *Euprepiae* mentioned by Gregory I,[3] the site of which several historians have sought for on the Aventine and in the neighbourhood of the *titulus Sabinae*. We are also ignorant of the fate of another monastery on the Aventine dedicated to St John, and referred to by the biographer of Leo III.

The *coenobium* of Sta Maria, at the western corner of the Aventine, which rises above the Tiber and the *Horrea publica,* was founded about 936 by St Odo, in the palace of the Consul Alberic, and numbers amongst its most illustrious sons the monk Hildebrand, who afterwards became Pope Gregory VII.[4] Beside the monastery of Sta Maria was that of St Boniface, built or enlarged, in all probability, by that same Sergius, Archbishop of Damascus, of whom we have spoken above.[5] It did not, however, remain long in the hands of the Greeks, for at the end of the tenth century it had already passed into the possession of Latin monks, and became so renowned for the sanctity of its members that Baronius calls it the *seminarium Sanctorum*.

Indeed, it seemed as though the most renowned representatives of the monastic ideal had been attracted thither; so much so that St Nilus the Younger, from his abode at Valleluce, directed Bishop Adalbert of Prague to this monastery, where he took the habit and filled for some time the humble post of cook. Baronius, the *coquus perpetuus* of the oratory of St Philip Neri, had, therefore, a famous predecessor in thus practising monastic obedience.

[1] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 117.
[2] Kerr. *op. cit.,* i, 114-15.
[3] *Op. cit.,* i, 1x5.
[4] *Lib. Pont.,* ii, 24.
[5] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 1x6.

On the opposite hill, not far from the oratory where Sylvia, the mother of Pope Gregory the Great, passed the last years of her widowhood in the devout practices of the religious life, there arose at the end of the seventh century the *cella nova,* built by the monks of Mar Saba, who had been driven out of Jerusalem. After a couple of centuries the Latins succeeded the Greeks, and in the time of Lucius II (1144-45) the monastery passed into the hands of the Cluniacs, and from these to the Cistercians, until finally it fell under "commenda"[1] and was finally abandoned.[2]

On the lesser Aventine, near the *titulus Balbinae,* another Greek monastery was erected, dedicated to the Saviour,[3] the prior of which possessed the privilege of singing the Gospel in his own tongue at the papal Mass on Easter Sunday.

A *coenobium* dedicated to St Peter and St Martin *in horrea* is recorded in a document of the tenth century, belonging to the archives of St Andrew on the Cœlian; but it cannot have been of any great importance, as it is never alluded to again.

On the other hand, the two convents of St John and of SS Mary and Benedict,[5] on the island in the Tiber, are very often referred to in documents of the late Middle Ages. They stood on the site now occupied by the hospital attached to the Church of San Giovanni Calibita.

A few steps from there, in the direction of San Nicola in Carcere, the Church of St Cecilia *Montis Pharphae*[6] would seem by its name to indicate some former town property of the monks of Farfa, but as nothing to that effect appears in the early account-books of the celebrated imperial abbey in Sabina, it is probable that the little church derived its name from the neighbouring palace of the Orsini, when, in the fifteenth century', the dignity of *commendatorius* of the monastery of Farfa had become almost an inherent right in that family.

Thus we have in the twelfth region a dozen religious houses, of which three were Greek, three belonged to nuns, and the rest were occupied by monks.

Regio XIII included the Jewish quarter on the farther side of the Tiber, and was enclosed by the river, the Janiculum, the Porta Portuensis, and the walls of the Leonine city. Ancient Christian memories abound herein; indeed, we may say that the whole history of Christian Rome seems to be gathered together in thisregion as in a brief summary,

[1] *i.e.,* its revenue was alienated.—Tr.
[2] Armellini, *op. cit.,* 590.
[3] *Op. cit.,* 619-20.
[4] *Op. cit.,* i. 128.
[5] *Op. cit.,* 610.
[6] *Op. cit.,* 622.

beginning with the palaces of the Cecili across the river, and the buildings of the ancient *taberna enieritoria* of Pope Callixtus, as far as the tomb of Innocent II (died 143) and the mosaics and paintings of Cavallini in the Basilica of Santa Maria.

It was here in this quarter of Trastevere, even now so different from all the rest of the city, that in the third century Callixtus identified himself so fully with the life and religious movement of the region that the particular district in front of his titular church was called from him *Area Callixti.*

No sooner had the Christians begun to enjoy freedom from persecution than they at once converted into basilicas and churches the dwelling-places of those martyrs whose presence there had been the glory of the Trastevere—Callixtus, Chrysogonus, Bonosa, Cecilia, Rufina, and Secunda. Later Gregory II dedicated to St Agatha his own house, which was beside the Church of St Chrysogonus, not far from the *excubitorium* of the *vigiles.* The profoundly religious spirit of the Trastevere did not weaken even in the general decadence which prevailed after the tenth century; so much so that one of the most renowned Roman abbeys entitled *in Mica Aurea,* at the foot of the Janiculum, dates from the first half of that unfeeling century.

Alongside of the ancient title of St Callixtus rose up the new building described in the documents as the *basilica Julii,* the possession of which was disputed in the fourth century by the various claimants to the Papacy. We may regard this church, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, as the true cathedral of this second Rome, separated by the Tiber from the city of the *fora* and the triumphal arches.

Gregory IV (827-44), finding the Basilica of Sta Maria in Trastevere in a somewhat neglected condition owing to the scarcity of priests, made it into an abbey, so that the monks should sing the divine Office day and night in the basilica, just as was done in all the chief sanctuaries of Rome. The passage in the *Liber Pontificalis*[1] relative to this, in which mention is made of *monachos canonicos,* is of great importance, for it points out this other aspect of Roman monasticism, which had as the chief object of its presence in the city the solemn celebration of the divine Office in the basilicas.

The monastery of the two *Anargyri* martyrs, Cosmas and Damian *in Mica Aurea,* was founded about 950 on the *Campus Brutianus* of the *Regionarii* by a certain Benedict, surnamed *Campaninus,*[2] who became a monk, and was buried in the Basilica of St Paul. It was in consequence of this that the abbey *in Mica Aurea* was likewise dedicated to the

[1] *Lib. Pont.,* ii, 78.

[2] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 12g *sqq.*

Apostle of the Gentiles. Owing to the great qualities of its earlier abbots, this new foundation soon rose to a high degree of influence, until it rivalled, and in some instances disputed with, the powerful imperial Abbey of Faria, concerning some property in the district of Corneto.

Almost at the foot of the Janiculum, towards the charming hillside of Monteverde, was to be seen the *coenobium* dedicated to the two martyrs Agatha and Cecilia, *ad colles jacentes,* on the place where was formerly the abode of St Cecilia. In that house she had faced death for the faith and for the Gospel, wherefore Pope Paschal I, in order the better to honour her memory, founded there an abbey,[1] charging the monks with the duty of carrying out the divine Office, both by day and by night, beside the bodies of Cecilia and of the other martyrs, which he had caused to be transferred hither from the cemeteries on the Appian Way.

Pope Gregory III had done the same thing a century earlier at the titular Church of St Chrysogonus,[2] and had built a monastery there in honour of the martyrs Stephen, Lawrence, and Chrysogonus, from which monastery there came some time afterwards the future Pope Stephen Hl. It is worthy of note that the new Gregorian foundation was at once declared independent of the jurisdiction of the titular priest of the basilica, so that it might be placed entirely under the internal direction of the abbot, precisely as was done in the case of the Vatican monasteries. This document is one of the oldest and most important in the history of the exemption of monasteries from the authority of the bishop. In founding the Abbey of St Chrysogonus, Gregory III probably wished to imitate an incident in the life of his holy predecessor, Pope Gregory II, who, as we have already seen, after the death of his mother Honesta, converted his own house into a monastery dedicated to St Agatha. This church still exists between St Chrysogonus and St Rufina, but the monks have left it now for many centuries.

St Benedict *in Piscinula,* almost opposite the *Pons Cestius,* was merely a dependent house of Monte Cassino.[3] A comparatively late tradition asserted that it was erected on the very place once occupied by the family palace of the holy Patriarch of Western monasticism; unfortunately this belief is not supported by any documentary evidence, though the church itself dates back to very early times.

Of the monastery of St Stephen *de curte* or *Rapigrani,* dating from the time of Gregory III,[4] we know only that it was situated in the Trastevere in the neighbourhood of the Church of St Rufina. Therefore it is, perhaps, to be identi-

[1] *Op. cit.,* i, 123.
[2] Armellini, *op. cit ,* 676.
[3] *Op. cit.,* i, i«5.
[4] *Op. dt.,* 685.

fied with the monastery of St Chrysogonus, which was dedicated also to the protomartyr Stephen.

On the *Arx Janiculensis* there existed in the later Middle Ages also a small *coenobium* dedicated to St Peter. This dedication gave rise, in the sixteenth century, to the legend that has fixed upon that spot, rather than on the Circus of Nero at the Vatican, as the place of the martyrdom of the Prince of the Apostles.

We find, consequently, in this region at least eight monasteries. The religious orders of women are not represented at all, not even at the tomb of St Cecilia, which is, perhaps, accounted for by the fact that almost all these monasteries were founded for the direct purpose of serving the basilicas, an office to which the female sex certainly could not attain.

There remains now only Regio XIV, containing the *Burgus* or Leonine city,[1] which, although regarded as a place by itself outside of Rome and the walls of Aurelian, formed in the Middle Ages the true centre of attraction in the capital of the *Orbis Christianus.*

There, in the Vatican cemetery, was the tomb of St Peter, surrounded by those of his successors. The liturgical feasts on the solemn days of the year, the majestic rites on the more important occasions connected with the Papacy, such as the consecration of Popes, the coronation of kings, the ordination of priests—all were celebrated beside the sepulchre of the first *Vicarius Christi ;* so that, although the Lateran, as being the ordinary residence of the Pope, held the position of mother church of Rome, yet the Vatican Basilica was his true cathedral, in which was preserved the ancient apostolic καβίδρα, on which, after Peter himself, had sat the great Pontiffs of the fourth and fifth centuries.

It was therefore impossible that this goal of the world's religious aspirations, this bulwark of the Roman faith, should not have constituted from the earliest times, following on the Peace of Constantine, a powerful attraction for the monks, who, indeed, lost no time in surrounding the Basilica of St Peter with their monasteries, like so many buttresses, and thus assured the continual singing, day and night, of the divine Office beside the tomb of the Galilean fisherman.

The oldest of the Vatican monasteries was, apparently, that dedicated by Leo I to the martyrs John and Paul,[2] which was erected to the right of the *Confessio* of St Peter,

[1] The Vatican was so named from having been fortified by Pope T_eo IV, in 846-52, against the Saracens.—Tr .

[2] *Lib. Pont.,* i, 90.

more or less where the altar of St Michael now stands beyond the transept.

A little distance off, and of far greater note, was the other monastery of St Martin *juxta ferratam* or *post absidam,*[1] to whose abbots was committed for a time the office of archcantors of the Vatican school of music. It appears, indeed, that the orphanage of the young choristers, at first probably entirely separate from the monastery, was entrusted in the seventh century to the care of the monastic community of St Martin, which for that reason also received the dignity of a deaconry. Later on we shall consider the work carried out by the abbots of this monastery in the development and spread of Gregorian art.

The founding of the *coenobium* of St Stephen *Kata Galla Patricia*[2] is connected with the story of Galla, daughter of the Consul Symmachus, who, according to Gregory I, ended her days in one of the religious houses near the Vatican. History does not determine which one it was, so we are free to make our own conjectures. Some writers have thought that the monastery of St Stephen may very well have been built by Galla as a convent, and that it only later on passed into the hands of monks. Others admit that she was its foundress, a fact for which the name *Kata Galla Patricia* vouches, but maintain that the convent in which the noble lady passed away was not that of St Stephen, for in this latter there is no trace at all of the monks ever having been preceded by a community of nuns. It is, however, certain that monks were in possession at the time of Gregory III (731-41), since they are named in an ordinance of that Pontiff relating to the service of the Vatican Basilica.

Of all the many basilicas which once surrounded the tomb of St Peter, there remains only this one, known otherwise as St Stephen *Major,* under its present title of St Stephen of the Abyssinians. The existing church is smaller than the original one, but it could easily be restored to its primitive style and size, for the columns which divide the nave from the aisles are still embedded in the walls, while those of the central arch, together with the whole apse of Leo III, may be seen in the garden of the adjoining hospice of the Abyssinians.

On the site of the present sacristy of St Peter's there formerly rose the *coenobium* of St Stephen *Minor,*[3] founded by Stephen II (752-57). It was the duty of the monks of this community, together with those of the other three monasteries existing around the Vatican Basilica, to celebrate daily the divine Office beside the tomb of St Peter.

In the Middle Ages the convents of the religious orders of

[1] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 145. [2] *Op. cit.* 143-47. [3] *Lib. Pon.* i, 451.

women were, for excellent reasons, excluded to a certain extent from the neighbourhood of St Peter's, where the enormous concourse of pilgrims of both sexes and every condition would have rendered the locality both disturbing and perilous. In the *Regesta* of Urban V, however, a convent *sanctae Mariae de virginibus prope sanctum Petrum de Urbe* is mentioned, with a church and cemetery of its own, which may, perhaps, be identified with St Catherine *de Cavalierottes*[1] between the basilica and the present Via del Mascherino.

Another enclosed community of nuns had their dwelling beside the Vatican Basilica, near the round Church of St Andrew,[2] the ancient mausoleum of the imperial family of the fifth century. In the late Middle Ages the duty of washing the altar-linen of the neighbouring basilica was entrusted to these nuns. This convent would seem to have been already noted as existing under Stephen V (885-91).

Records are found of other lesser monasteries, the inmates of which, though they did not actually serve the Vatican Basilica, sang the divine praises in their respective oratories adjoining the great sanctuary, such as those of St Sosius,[3] St Thecla,[4] near the *Schola Saxonum,* of St Vincent, and of the Holy Cross, called also *in Hierusalem,*[5] and, lastly, on the extreme verge of the Janiculum, *juxta palatiolum,* the *monasterium Michaelis,* with its chapel of St Maria, recorded in the biography of Leo IIU' This church is now dedicated to St Michael the Archangel, but it is not improbable that the Michael who first gave his name to the sacred spot was some pious Lombard, and that only afterward was the name of the angelic protector of himself and his family substituted for his own.

What a sublime triumph of the power of faith is this ! On the very place where Nero had thought to drown the religion of Jesus Christ in the blood of its first Pontiff, almost every nation and kingdom has competed for the honour of being the protector of his sacred tomb. Here they founded vast *scholae* and hospices for pilgrims ; here they endowed altars and built oratories around the Basilica of St Peter, hastening to Rome from the most distant countries of Europe in order to take the monastic habit in one of the Vatican monasteries, as though the soil consecrated by the cross of the Prince of the Apostles were no longer a part of medieval Rome with its tumults and factions, but a sacred cosmopolitan city, of which all Christians of every nation felt themselves to be citizens, and for that reason were desirous of being represented therein

[1] Artnellini. *op. cit.,* 782. [2] *OP- cit.,* 744. [3] *Op. cit.,* 737. [4] *Op cit.,* 760. [5] *op. cit.,* 738-39. [6] *Op. cit.,* 759.

and of possessing a *pied-à-terre* in the mother-city and universal capital of the religion of Christ.

Summing up, then, we can count some ten religious houses in the early Middle Ages around the *Confessio* of the Apostle Peter. Of these, perhaps, two were for nuns, the rest belonging to Latin monks, to the exclusion of Orientals.

It appears that the Romans, who showed themselves so generous towards the Greeks and the Syrians, granting them monasteries near St Praxedes, St Lawrence, and on the Palatine, etc., wished to preserve unaltered the Latin character of the Vatican quarter. Perhaps they wished by this exclusion to demonstrate that, although the Chair of Peter in the Eternal City is the mother of all other churches, yet the Primacy over the whole of Christendom is the exclusive privilege of the Roman See, which, according to the striking expression of Ignatius of Antioch—*praesidet in regione Romanorum*—exercises from the City of the Seven Hills her divine Office of " President of the bond of love."[1]

There now remain the suburban monasteries around the great sepulchral Basilicas of St Paul, of St Lawrence, of the Apostles *ad Catacumbas,* etc., which from the very first attracted the devotion of both monks and nuns, who eagerly sought to establish themselves in their neighbourhood.

A Gregorian *praeceptum* of 604 has reference to a convent on the Via Ostiensis, dedicated to St Stephen, in the immediate vicinity of the Basilica of St Paul. In the eighth century this house, which in the meantime had been given over to monks, seemed to Gregory II to have fallen greatly from its early splendour, so, in order to ensure its continuance, he united it to the neighbouring Abbey of St Cesarius, and entrusted the carrying out of the liturgical Office at the tomb of the Apostle of the Gentiles[2] to the communities of both monasteries. The local clergy were, for the time being, charged with the management of the patrimony belonging to the basilica, and with the administration of the sacraments; but a few years later Gregory III put the monks in full possession of the property, with the obligation of paying a just honorarium to the hebdomadary priests who celebrated the daily Masses at the various altars of the basilica.[3]

About the third milestone on the Via Laurentia, in a low marshy plain at the foot of a small hill, from which spring the *Aquae Salviae,* stands a monastery, the founder of which, according to Benedict of Mount Soracte, was no other than

[1] St Ignatius. *Ad. Rom. Sal.*
[2] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, *170.* [3] θ?·

the famous patrician Narses himself, who in 552 delivered Rome from the Goths.[1] The burial-place of St Zeno and his companions in martyrdom was hollowed out in the heart of the hill, and it is possible that the constant dripping of the *Aquae Salviae* from the vaulting of those damp caves gave to the place the name preserved in the martyrologies: *ad guttam jugiter manantem.*

But the memory of Zeno and his fellow-martyrs was easily eclipsed by the association with the Apostle Paul, who, according to an ancient tradition, was beheaded at that very spot. The monastery erected by Narses was Oriental from its inception, for it was occupied by monks from Cilicia, who were consequently compatriots of Paul of Tarsus. They may perhaps have contributed on their own account to strengthen the tradition connecting the martyrdom of the Apostle with the *Aquae Salviae.*

When, in the time of Honorius I, the relics of the martyred Persian monk Anastasius were brought from Jerusalem to Rome, the Pope considered that the most natural place for them was the Oriental monastic sanctuary of the *Aquae Salviae,* so he caused them to be laid near that monastery in a basilica constructed especially in memory of the saint. As time went on, Latin monks succeeded those monks from Cilicia; then followed Armenians, Cistercians, Franciscans, and finally Trappists of the reform of Citeaux, who remain there to this day.[2]

At the second milestone on the Via Appia, in the low-lying district called *ad Catacumbas,* beside the *basilica Apostolorum,* where the relics of St Peter and St Paul once rested, was a very ancient monastery, the origin of which dates back to Sixtus III.[3] It is probable that when the Lombards devastated the country around Rome, and the Popes were consequently obliged to bring into the city the bodies of the martyrs from the cemeteries outside the walls, this monastery was deserted and left without inmates, for we know that Nicholas I (858-67) re-established it,[4] dedicating it on that occasion also to St Sebastian, who had originally been buried in that holy vault, in *initio cryptae.*

At the second milestone of the Via Latina there rose up on the cemetery of Apronianus the Basilica of St Eugenia, at the place where the martyr was laid by her own mother. Her *Acta* tell of a company of consecrated virgins whom she had brought to the service of Jesus Christ; hence Adrian I, in order to preserve the memory of these first-fruits of the religious life in Rome connected with the martyr's name, restored the church of St Eugenia and built a convent

[1] *Mon. Germ. Scrip.,* iii,
[2] *Lib. Pont.,* i, 234.
[3] Kerr, *op. cit.,* 171.
[4] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 162.

adjacent to it, which, however, must already have been abandoned in the time of Stephen V. The *Liber Pontificalis* relates the obligation prescribed by Adrian I for the nuns. They were to sing daily in the Basilica of St Eugenia the Offices of Matins, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, and Vespers. The night Office and Compline are not included, as at that time they were peculiar to the Benedictine *cursus,* and therefore did not form part of the daily public use of the Church.[1]

On the Via Tiburtina *in agro Verano,* where St Lawrence was buried, there must have been established as early as the fourth century a community of nuns concerning whom there remain a number of sepulchral inscriptions. Later, Pope Hilary[2] built a monastery there, also dedicated to St Lawrence, to which, under Leo III, was added another dedicated to St Cassian of Imola. Leo IV, having found them both forsaken, restored them, and, forming a single community of Greek monks, enjoined on them the duty of singing the divine Office in Greek at the tomb of St Lawrence.[3]

At the tenth milestone of the Via Labicana appears the cemetery of Zoticus, where several martyrs were buried. An ancient inscription referring to a *Dominicus Abbas* who restored the porch and the bell-tower of the basilica attests that this sanctuary, too, was under the care of the monks.[4]

Near the tomb of the virgin martyr St Agnes there existed from the time of the Emperor Constantine a community of nuns, which was still flourishing when Leo III was Pope, and was honoured by being the recipient of gifts from him. The nuns were followed by monks, who, by the desire of Alberic, accepted in the tenth century the reform of St Odo; but their discipline having again become relaxed, Paschal II, in 1112, turned out the few remaining monks and brought back the nuns,[5] who in their turn had to give way to the Canons Regular.

On the Via Salaria Nuova, near the cemetery of St Saturninus, we find up to the end of the Middle Ages a religious community the origin of which is entirely unknown to us.[6] To another monastery was likewise assigned the care of the Basilica of St \zalentine on the Via Flaminia, a dependency of the rich Abbey of St Sylvester *in Capite,* which exercised jurisdiction over it. In 1060 mention is made of Abbot Theobald, who *Iconas vero quinque fecit . . . passionariuin in festivitate Sancti Valentini . . . campanile campanas II . . . clausuram monasterii a fundamentis construxit.*[7]

The tomb of the martyr Paneras on the \ ia Aurelia was

[1] *Lib. Pon'if,* i, 510.
[2] Armellini, *op. cit.,* 883.
[3] Armellini, *op. cit.,* 853.
[4] *Op. cit..* i, 245·
[5] ^*err'*
[6] *Op. cit.,* 846-47.
[7] *Op.* «G ii, 1x2.
“*fy* L x59·

held in very great honour, and a station was solemnly celebrated there on the Sunday *in albis,* quite contrary to the Roman liturgical custom, which did not admit of any stations being held in churches outside the walls, with the exception of the patriarchal basilicas. Towards the end of the sixth century the faithful who frequented this sanctuary were very much dissatisfied with the local clergy belonging to the *titulus Chrysogoni,* who left them without a Mass, even on days of obligation. For this reason Gregory the Great decided in 594 to entrust the sanctuary to a body of monks under the rule of Abbot Maurus; and, as there already existed at the Lateran a monastery dedicated to St Paneras, the new foundation took the name of the Milanese martyr St Victor, to whom the private oratory of the monks was therefore consecrated.[1]

In order to complete the list of Roman monasteries, we must also add those whose situation is uncertain, such as that of St Aristus, spoken of by Gregory the Great in a *praeceptum* of 604,[2] which was probably built over the tomb of the martyr at Ardea, and another founded by Pope Boniface IV (608-15) in his own house,[3] but which should, perhaps, be sought, not in Rome, as Kerr[4] appears to have done, but in the Abruzzi, whence the Pontiff originally came.

Moreover, we have to bear in mind that the documents we possess concerning the history of medieval Rome are by no means complete, and that this circumstance, far from excluding the possibility, renders it, on the contrary, very probable that there existed a far greater number of religious houses, of which we have lost all trace. Of this we have a corroboration in the fact that, whereas the convents of the Byzantine period in the list which we have compiled amount to perhaps five or six, Gregory the Great, on the other hand, in writing to the noble lady Theotista, states that he was then providing in Rome itself for the sustenance of 3,000 nuns.[5]

Five convents forsooth! An author of the eleventh century relates that in his time there existed in the Eternal City about sixty houses of canons, together with some thirty more monasteries. Of these sixty houses we may assume that thirty at least were originally Benedictine monasteries. This is not a gratuitous assumption, for we know that about the tenth century a great number of monasteries, even in Rome—those, for instance, attached to the Vatican, Liberian, and Lateran Basilicas—having fallen away from their primitive discipline, were converted into residences for canons. This

[1] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 176 *sqq.*
[2] *Epist.,* fib. XIV, Ep. 26 ; *P.L.* LXXVII, 1318.
[3] *Lib. Pontif.,* i, no, 317.
[4] Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 155.
[5] *Efist.,* lib. VII, Ep. 26 ; *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 881.

would give us, therefore, an average of about sixty monastic abbeys devoted mainly to the carrying out of the various Offices in the chief sanctuaries of Rome.

Before going on to the second part of this inquiry concerning the essentially liturgical mode of life led by these monks at Rome it is necessary to make certain comments.

The historical importance of such an immense number of religious houses in the capital of the Christian world is obvious to all. Its liturgical and ascetic importance is even greater, for it fulfils in the Holy City of the New Covenant that promise of the prophet: *Super muros tuos, Jerusalem, constitui custodes; tota die et tota nocte non tacebunt laudare nomen Domini.*' The realization of this fact acquires all the more value because these communities were, for the most part, founded by the supreme Pontiffs themselves, many of whom converted their own family dwellings into monasteries; indeed, this was so commonly done that it practically became the rule.

The mode of life led in these monasteries and convents was, as we shall presently see more clearly, eminently liturgical and contemplative. This was a time when trials and misfortunes of every kind afflicted the Holy City; therefore the Popes and the faithful vied with one another in opening new retreats for prayer and penance, in the firm conviction that these alone could save their country from ruin. St Gregory, in his letter to the noble lady Theotista, declares openly—perhaps in the hope that she would impress the fact upon the Byzantine Court—that if it were not for the prayers of the 3,000 nuns maintained by the Apostolic See Rome would long since have perished. *In hac urbe multae sunt {ancillae Dei)·, nam, juxta notitiam qua dispensatur, tria millia reperiuntur. Et quidem de sancti Petri Apostolorum principis rebus LXXX annuas libras accipiunt. . . . Harum vero talis vita est, atque in tantum lacrimis et abstinentia districta, ut credamus quia, si ipsae non essent; nullus nostrum jam per tot annos in loco hoc subsistere inter Langobardorum gladios potuisset.*2

This, indeed, is the social mission of holy souls in the Church, and the noble aim for which in the golden ages of faith churches and monasteries were multiplied, chaplaincies and chapters endowed, until, especially in Italy, even villages and country districts of minor importance, down to a hundred years ago, boasted their own collegiate church with its canons, who day and night offered to God in the name of the local community the incense of public prayer. Nowadays, unhappily, all these voices which once were raised to heaven

» VII, Ep. 26; *P.L.* LXXVII. 881.

are dumb. The irreligious spirit of the age reasserts the ancient resolve *quiescere faciamus omnes dies festos Dei a terra,*[1] and seeks to restrict the worship of God within the sanctuary of the individual conscience, as though it were permissible for society, whether private or public, or for the State as such to proclaim itself " anarchical " ; that is, to deny the first transcendental principle—God, from whom they originate and to whom they tend. May the Lord, then, raise up many priests and intercessors, who, by their sacrifices and prayers offered in the holy place for the sins of mankind, may stand like Moses between the sinner and the justice of God. This is another high social mission which the sacred Liturgy fulfils.

Another consideration—borrowed from Gregory the Great—will explain better the individual and private aim which the Popes and bishops had in view, in early times, in giving so much encouragement to the development of the monastic life. To the duty which was theirs of proclaiming to the nations the holy Gospel in which the religious life is set forth and counselled by the divine Master, so that it cannot remain hidden from the Christian soul, there was added a further point which the great Pontiff explained in these words to the Emperor Maurice of Constantinople when the latter was desirous of hindering his soldiers from entering the monasteries : *Multi enim sunt qui possunt religiosam vitam etiam cum saeculari habitu ducere. Et plcrique sunt qui, nisi omnia reliquerint, salvari apud Deum nullatenus possunt.*[2]

Perhaps someone will ask how much still survives of the traditions of ancient monachism in Rome. The answer is a delicate one, and comparisons with bygone ages are always dangerous. Even now at Sta Prassede, at Sta Croce in Gerusalemme, at Sta Maria Nuova, etc., there still exist monastic communities, more or less numerous, who devoutly serve those sanctuaries.

Beside the tomb of the Apostle of the Gentiles there still remains intact, after some fifteen centuries, the abbey dedicated to St Paul, two of whose abbots became Popes—the great Hildebrand and Paschal II. The Benedictine Rule, which was several times restored in that famous monastery, still flourishes there, and the divine Office is celebrated day and night by the monks with befitting splendour at the tomb of the Apostle. After the daily singing of the Mass and of the Office, the monks devote the remaining time to pastoral work in the surrounding parish; to the education of young aspirants to the clerical life, who form together a kind of college ; to the training of novices for their Order ; and to

* Psalm lxxiii, 8.
• *Epist.,* lib. III. Ep. 65 ; *P.L.* LXXVII. col. 663.

studying in the library of the monastery or in those of the Roman Congregations.

The Abbot of St Paul's, as Ordinary, has jurisdiction over a small diocese in the territory of the ancient Capenati, which has been under the charge of the abbey from the eleventh century onwards. The Benedictine nuns of the Abbey of St Magnus in Amelia[1] are also subject to the Abbot of St Paul's as their Ordinary. Quite recently the celebrated Abbey of Farfa in the Sabina has been incorporated with that of St Paul, and in consequence a small monastic community once more flourishes in that ancient abbey. There, too, the mode of life is identical with that led by the monks at St Paul's, and with the ideals that inspire the rule of Monte Cassino.

The Benedictine abbey is essentially a school of perfection —*Dominici schola servitii,* as St Benedict calls it—under the rule of an abbot, who is the father and guide of his monks. The chanting of the liturgical prayers and work sanctified by obedience alternate with his conferences and his public and private instruction in such a manner that the monks, adoring God in spirit and in truth, separated from the world, yet benefactors of it, mediators between it and God, fully exemplify by their life those words carved on the gates of Monte Cassino, which form the motto of the whole spiritual family of St Benedict—*Pax; ora et labora*—in that peace which cometh from prayer and from work.[2]

When we attempt to describe the special character which marks early monasticism in general, and that of Rome in particular, we are confronted with a real historical difficulty. This fact has not been overlooked by students, who attribute it to the complete absence of any central point of government which would have made of monasticism an organic bod}·. This lack, which may surprise us in these modern days, accustomed as we arc to the systems of the great religious orders which came into existence after the thirteenth century, is a consequence of the very nature of the *Regula Sancta* of St Benedict, devised and put forth for the use of a special community which, with its abbot, with the local council of the

[1] Atown in the province of Perugia, formerly called Ameria.—Tr.

[2] The Benedictine life is almost unknown to-day to a large part of the secular clergy. This is a great loss to the Church, for if the clergy came more in contact with the monks, especially with those of the greater abbeys, besides the undeniable advantages that they would gain by refreshing their spirit from time to time in those verdant oases of prayer, they would also get to know whither to direct possible vocations, particularly among the younger men, with whom as parish priests they are brought into touch in their parochial work.

elder members, and with the higher authority of the bishop of the diocese watching over it, constitutes an independent whole, having no relationship with other superiors or with other monastic houses of the same type and mode of life.

In short, St Benedict wrote his imperishable Rule for a particular monastery and not for an Order; his aim was to form, under the paternal and monarchical authority of the abbot, a school of holiness or of divine service, as he calls it, and not to organize a system of separate houses with a central government. The immediate consequence of this authority, which is the foundation of the Benedictine edifice, is that character of spontaneous variety which may be found in the life of a Benedictine monastery at various times and in different places.

This is the source of the thousand aspects assumed by monasticism in the early Middle Ages. In England, for instance, the monks were great missionaries; in Germany they devoted themselves to agriculture along the banks of the Rhine; at Rome they spent their days in the solemn liturgical service of the basilicas; at Farfa, on the other hand, they had set up a powerful theocratic state, which, acting as a link between Romans and Lombards, between the Papacy and the Empire, had produced accomplished diplomats and wise politicians of great influence and authority.

How, then, is it possible to write a single history of this many-sided Benedictine life? All these numerous centres of action and spirituality, with their various manifestations, bound together only by the bond of charity, must be studied separately by the historian, in the same manner as we study the states of ancient Greece, each of which had its own civil and religious character, entirely distinct from that of the others.

Usually, when we speak of monks, our memory seems to call up as a matter of course the image of those great abbeys as described in works of fiction, surrounded by towers and walls, and of those rich libraries where, in the *Specula,* the *Summae,* and the *Encyclopaediae,* all the wisdom of ancient days was contained. These special local conditions are often regarded as the general rule, so that we are quite mystified when the history of some particular monastery presents it to us in an entirely different light.

This has been precisely the case with regard to the history of Roman monasticism in the early Middle Ages. It is true that we cannot claim that the documents which we possess concerning it are many; but they are sufficiently numerous to permit of our tracing its character, if not in its close details, at any rate in its general lines; we will therefore only attempt a sketch of the subject, not a finished picture.

The principle of renunciation by the monk of the things of the world led him from the earliest moment to actual separation from other men. Indeed, among those things which constitute the essence of monachism, solitude was the one which stood out prominently from the first hour of its history.

The early fathers, with that ruthless logic peculiar to simple minds, adjudged it to be wholly unfitting for a monk to live amid the disturbing influences of the city. St Macarius used to repeat constantly to himself the words, " If thou art a monk, go to the hills " ; and the *Regula Sancta* in the sixth century, condensing all the ascetic tradition which preceded it, dwells in a special manner on the absolute necessity of solitude.[1]

It was in order to prevent the monks from being constrained by any circumstance whatsoever to break this rule that St Benedict planned the monastery in such a manner that the various crafts, the gardens, the mill, etc., should all be contained within the walls of the abbey—a true citadel of God—sufficient unto itself and wholly independent of the world, thus forming a refreshing oasis for the spirit in the arid desert of this world.

The history of the greater number of the ancient monasteries clearly shows how carefully this most essential precept of the *Regula Sancta* was observed. Indeed, the immense abbeys of the ninth century, the description of which still fills us to-day with astonishment, were merely the result of the development of this first plan evolved by St Benedict, who, far from holding the modern idea of a congregational system, intended that each monastery should suffice absolutely for all its own material needs, and so lead a completely independent existence.

The exercising of the various crafts, a practice which the monastic codex of Monte Cassino inherited from Pachomius, and the cultivating of the land by the monks, were conditions, not only the most conducive to economy, but also the most favourable to the increase of the wealth of the monasteries. With opulence came in due course political importance, which added its glamour to the religious influence of the abbey over the people. This explains the prominent position in civil affairs which monks and abbots held in Italy during the Lombard period, when both political and military power were closely bound up with territorial possessions. Hence the *raison d'être* of the moats and towers surrounding so many Benedictine abbeys in the Middle Ages.

Given this general condition of things regarding the religious houses of the Benedictine Order, when we come to

[1] *Reg. S Benedicti,* cap. LXVI, *De Ostiario Monasterii.*

compare them with those existing in the Roman monasteries we at once perceive that life in the ecclesiastical capital of the world was very different. This means that Roman monasticism had a character, a mode of life, and a history entirely its own.

The *Liber Pontificalis,* which is the principal source of the ecclesiastical history of Rome in the early Middle Ages, records the founding of many of the abbeys within the city, showing them to have been built by one Pope or another in the vicinity of some important basilica, with the intention that the principal occupation of the monks should be the chanting of the day and night Offices in the sanctuaries of the martyrs. Indeed, the institution of these monastic chapters in the basilicas became, in course of time, such a general rule that it seemed to Paschal I, for example, a very serious inconvenience that the *Basilica Callixti* in the Trastevere was not yet served by a choir of monks.

The Roman abbeys were about sixty in number, but in the greater basilicas the liturgical Offices were entrusted to the care of three, four, and sometimes even five separate monasteries. It would take too long to enumerate here all the references to the various foundations given in the *Liber Pontificalis* which have already been mentioned in the regional fists. It will only be necessary to speak of a few which are especially interesting on account of the peculiar circumstances accompanying their institution. Thus, for instance, Gregory II restored the two monasteries of the greater Basilica of Sta Maria, the *Gerontocomium,* and that of St Andrea *kata Barbara, ut utraque monasteria ad sanctam Dei Genitricem singulis diebus atque noctibus laudes canerent.*[1]

The same Pope did even more at St Paul's, for he made the ancient monastery of St Stephen habitable and joined it to that of St Cesarius, placing there a monastic community, *ut tribus per diem vicibus et noctu matutinos dicerent.*[2] Here we see the parts of the Roman *cursus* in use at that time—Terce, Sext, None, and the Office at Dawn. No mention is yet made of Vespers,[3] still less of the Benedictine *cursus* in the Roman basilicas.

An anonymous privilege in the *Liber Diurnus* in favour of one of the Pauline monasteries undoubtedly refers to these restorations of Gregory II, and throws valuable light on the brief notices given to us by that Pope's biographer.

The Pontiff laments that the ancient monastery of St

* *Lib. Pontif.,* i, 397-8.

[1] *Op. cit.,* i. 397. *Cf* Schuster, *L'Oratorio di S Stefano sulla Via Ostiense* in *Nuovo Collett, d'archeol. crist.,* x, 185 *sqq.,* 1904.

• They were, however, counted as part of the Roman Office in the time of Adrian I. Cf. *Lib. Pontif.,* i, 506.

Stephen *ancillatum Deil* should have been abandoned for so many years. In order, therefore, to restore it to its former honourable position, he unites it to a neighbouring monastery, so that in the sanctuary of the Protomartyr there should be someone to sing the divine Office and to attend to the lamps. The other monastery recorded in the text of the *Liber Diurnus* can only be that of St Cesarius, for we find no trace of the existence of any other religious house in the neighbourhood of the Basilica of St Paul. It is certain that in the ninth century the two monasteries of St Stephen and St Cesarius, which had at first been separate, were united so as to form but one community, whose abbot, Roizus, in a document in the *Regesta* of Subiaco, signs himself abbot of the monastery of SS Stephen and Cesarius *qui vocatur quatuor angulos.*2

Gregory III and Adrian I restored in their turn the Vatican and Lateran monasteries, giving to them special rules which were to ensure the liturgical Offices being rendered with all due pomp and ceremony. For the Roman monasteries psalmody was their foremost occupation; indeed, it was almost the only reason for their existing in the heart of the capital of the world, and this liturgical character for many years distinguished the monachism of Rome.

The biographer of Gregory IV well expresses this thought when, speaking of the monastery of Sta Maria in Trastevere, he says that the Pope *monachos canonicos aggregavit, qui inibi officium facerent.*3 This title of " monk-canons " was certainly not too easily earned, if the great length of the monastic liturgy be taken into consideration. After the time of Adrian I the Roman *cursus,* having already taken many of its parts from the monastic *cursus,* summoned the monks six times during the day and once at night to fulfil their duties in the basilicas. This they did, sacrificing to the Roman *cursus* the one prescribed by the *Regula,* in order to conform entirely to the liturgical traditions of the Apostolic See, which may still be traced in the *Ordines Romani,* the antiphonary, the annotations of Amalarius, etc.

The *Completorium* is hardly ever mentioned among the canonical hours of the Office, perhaps because it was an altogether private form of prayer said by the monks, not in the basilicas, but in the inner oratories of their monasteries immediately before retiring to rest. Vespers were admitted at Rome only later among the hours of the daily *cursus;* hence it is not surprising that the purely monastic Office of

1 *Cf.* De Rossi. *Roma sotterr.,* i, 141. *De Locis Sanct. Martyr, qui sunt foris civit. Romae.*

« *Cf.* Schuster, *op. cit.* Cf. *Regest. Sublac.* (Edit. Allodi-Levi), n. 127. p. 177; n. 139, p. 190.

* *Lib, Pontif.,* ii. 78·

Compline should have been left out of the liturgical hours of the Office.

From several passages in the *Liber Pontificalis* it seems clear that the liturgical psalms were always sung. Paschal I, in fact, having restored the Lateran monastery of SS Sergius and Bacchus—so well known to us by now—ordered that the monks should sing both the day and the night Office : *Laudes et hymnos noctu dieque modulanter decantent.*[1] Similar terms are used in speaking of the liturgical Office at St Peter's, St Praxedcs, St Cecilia, and other churches.

The night Office was the one which was celebrated by the monks with the greatest solemnity. Indeed, whereas the people often took part in the chanting of the day-hours, the *Vigiliae* were left almost entirely to the devotion of the monks. The night Office had always been the special glory of monasticism.

Many Popes, therefore, put forth special decrees for the better ordering of this portion of the divine Office.[2] The twelve traditional psalms were always sung, but in course of time the ceremony acquired a solemnity and magnificence entirely Roman in character. The *Confessio* around the tombs of the martyrs was often illuminated by silver lamps; other precious candelabra shed sober light on the ambones, and frequently the altar was incensed.

Before the time of Stephen V this incensing was performed in St Peter's once only during the night; but he ordered that *per singulas lectiones et responsoria adoleatur*[3]—that is, three times on ferial days, and nine on feasts. This use continued at Rome for several centuries, and Benedict the Canon gives us some interesting details concerning the rite for the incensing of the altar of St Paul on the night preceding his feast. Leo IV, in the ninth century, had already established that the *laudes vespertinae* on that day should be sung, not by the monks alone, as on ordinary days, but by the *schola* and by the whole of the clergy.[4]

In Benedict's day the Pope used to go to St Paul's in the afternoon of the Feast of the Holy Apostles, and on that evening he took his collation in the adjacent abbey. After this frugal meal the Pope and the clergy were present at the *Vigiliae,* during which, at the fourth Lesson, the Pontiff rose from his place to perform the incensing of the apostolic tomb.

Taking the thurible from the hands of the archdeacon, he let it down into the *cataracta ad corpus,* through the wide openings which may still be seen in the Apostle's tombstone below the *fenestella confessionis.* It was also the custom to introduce *brandea,* or linen-cloths, through these apertures,

[1] *Lib. Pontif.,* ii, 58.
[2] *Of. at.,* ii, X94.
[3] *Op. cit.,* i, 397-8.
[4] *Op. at.,* ii, 108.

that they might be blessed by contact with the body of St Paul. The thurible was left hanging under the altar until the Feast of St Paul in the following year, when the Pope once more drew it forth and consigned it to the archdeacon, so that he might distribute the charcoal and the ashes among the people. Benedict the Canon adds that persons suffering from fever who devoutly drank the water, in which a small quantity of the powder of the charcoal had been dissolved, were at once restored to health *in fide Apostoli.*[1]

During the summer season one short Lesson only was to be sung at the vigils, according to the *Regula Sancta,* and this not from the *analogium,* but from memory.[2]

The reason which prompted St Benedict to suppress to a great extent the singing of the Lessons and of the lengthy responsories following them was undoubtedly the shortness of the summer nights. Had he not done so the length of the night Office would hardly have allowed the monks to sing the Office of Dawn at the break of day and then to go off betimes in the early morning to their work in the fields. In Rome, on the other hand, the custom was somewhat different, for as soon as light began to appear in the sky the psalms of the vigil were at once brought to an end, whether finished or not, in order to greet the rising of the sun with the Office of Dawn.

A certain analogy with the Roman use is, however, to be found in the eleventh chapter of the Rule of St Benedict, where provision is made for the case in which the monks, not having been called in time, arose too late for the vigiliary Office. They are not, in consequence, to protract it beyond the usual hour, but are to diminish the number of Lessons and responsories, in order that the night Office may be already terminated when the moment comes for singing that of the dawn. Such was the importance then attributed to the offering of the liturgical prayers at the time and hour prescribed by the Scriptures, or by the tradition of the Apostles.

This diminution permitted by St Benedict during the summer months was not, however, customary in Rome,[3] and the number of psalms and Lessons remained unaltered both summer and winter. The reason for this was that the Roman monks were not called upon to do such assiduous manual labour; indeed, this form of hard work was not possible in a city like Rome, where monasteries were too numerous to allow of each one possessing, as the Rule enjoins, fields,

[1] *P.L.* LXXVIII, col. 1051.
[2] *Reg. S Benedicti,* c. x. *Qualiter aestatis tempore agatur nocturna laus.*
[3] *Cf.* Anonymi Sangall, in Gerbert. *Monum. VtUris Liturg. alemann.,* vol. ii. 181 (Sant-Blasien, X779).

gardens, mills, bakeries, etc., all within the boundary walls of the abbey.

The generosity of the Popes supplied what was wanting in this respect, and though the Roman monks did not work in the fields, yet they had in their service whole families of serfs—this mild form of slavery tempered by Christianity continued to exist in Italy down to about the eleventh century—who cultivated the large country estates belonging to the monasteries.

Thus we know that Gregory III, for instance, gave to the new monastery of St Chrysogonus, founded by him, *praedia et dona atque familiam;*[1] Paschal I likewise assigned to the convent of SS Agatha and Cecilia the property of the old hospice of St Pellegrinus, consisting in *agros, vineas, etiam domos necnon rusticam familiam,*[2] and to the Lateran monastery of SS Sergius and Bacchus the same Pontiff gave *familias, massas, vineas.*[3]

Also, in the Penitential of Theodore of Canterbury, mention is made of these serfs belonging to the Roman monks, and it is further noted that the Greek monks did not possess any: *Graecorum monachi servos non habent, monachi romanorum habent.*[4] This was already provided for in chapter forty-eight of the *Regula,* where only in exceptional cases were the monks to attend *per se ad fruges recolligendas;* ordinarily also at Monte Cassino in St Benedict's time only the serfs, or *rustici,* performed suchlike labour.

All these lands, vineyards, and peasants formed the fixed patrimony of every Roman monastery—that which the official biographer of Paschal I calls *stipendia monachorum.* To these sources of income was not infrequently added the "golden largess," *benedictiones in auro,* a special alms from the Pope. This might be more or less frequent according to the purse and the generosity of the donor, but it often came as a real blessing to the administration of the monasteries, whose financial condition was usually far from flourishing.

The *Liber Pontificalis* records several of these donations, of which it will suffice to quote that of John V (died 686), who divided among the clergy, the monasteries, the *mansionarii* of the basilicas, and the deacons 1,300 soldi—a considerable sum for those days—and that of his successor Conon, who gave to the clergy and the monasteries a *benedictionem in auro,* as the Pontifical relates. As a rule the official biographer of the Pontiffs of the early Middle Ages never fails to mention the *roga* or distribution of money made by them to the clergy and the monks, whether on the

[1] *Lib. Pontif.,* i, 418-9 [2] *Op. cit.,* ii. 57. [3] *op. cit.,* ii, 58.
[4] Theodori Cantuar., *Portent.,* c. viii ; *P.L* XCIX, col. 931.

occasion of their election to the Papacy, or in the case of any such legacy bequeathed by them in their will.

It may, perhaps, surprise some persons to hear of these alms given to fairly wealthy monasteries, but the wonder ceases when one considers how difficult it had become to cultivate the wide estates of the monasteries at a time when the *Campagna Romana* was deserted owing to the many barbarian incursions, and when in consequence these properties must for the most part have been bare and unproductive.

The expenses, too, of the upkeep of a monastery must have been very heavy in those times of famine, war, and pestilence, and besides the actual maintenance of the community there was a necessary outlay for the liturgical service, for codices, vestments, balsam, incense, and oil. The *domus cultae,* or farms, on the other hand, whilst being of very great advantage, yet presented so many difficulties of management that it was not always possible for an abbey to possess one.

When the biographer of Paschal I describes the gifts made by that Pope to the convent of St Cecilia, he says that they were intended *pro subsidio et luminariorum concinnatione.*

A great deal more was required by Gregory III from the monks of St Paul, for, whilst granting them possession of the high-altar of the basilica with its offerings, he ordered that, besides the maintenance of the lamps, they should furnish every day six specified offerings, either in money or in kind, for the officiating clergy, to be presented at the moment of the Offertory in the five Masses which were then being celebrated at the various altars of the church. It must not, however, be imagined that when Gregory III was Pope the monks had already entered everywhere into possession of the revenues of the urban titular churches, and that the hebdomadary clergy were reduced to receiving their stipends from the abbot, as was the case at St Paul's.

Such a system of concentration of power in the hands of the monks met with almost insuperable difficulties, especially in the chief basilicas, where the clergy stood out to a man for their rights, and endeavoured to restrain as well as they could the growing interference of the monks in the sanctuary. From this arose the frequent increase in the number of the clergy, which the *Liber Pontificalis* notes in the lives of some of the Popes of the sixth century, and also that species of conflict between the two parties of which we may read in other papal biographies. Some Popes favoured the secular, others the regular clergy. These gradually took the place of the alrcadv diminished titular clergy, until the latter were finally obliged to abandon the serving of the basilicas almost entirely to the monks.

This is precisely what happened at the Basilica of St Paneras on the Via Aurelia, a sanctuary greatly celebrated throughout the Middle Ages, which was originally dependent on the priests of the titular Church of St Chrysogonus in the Trastevere. Gregory the Great in 594 installed there a body of monks under the rule of Abbot Maurus. In an epistle addressed to the latter, the Pontiff deplores the negligence shown by the clergy attached to the service of that famous sanctuary, and lays upon Abbot Maurus the obligation of having the *Opus Dei*—as St Gregory calls the psalmody, according to the expression in the *Regula Sancta*—duly carried out every day in the basilica of the martyr, maintaining in the monastery for that purpose a priest who is regularly to celebrate the holy mysteries.[1]

Elsewhere, on the other hand, as at St Peter's, the monks had no duties of any kind in the basilicas, beyond that of the daily Office; the solemn Masses were sung by the hebdomadary priests and the cantors, who also officiated at Vespers on the greater festivals of the year.

Gregory III, after he had built the oratory of All Saints at St Peter's, distinguishing carefully between the functions of the monks and those of the presbyters, known as *cubiculares,* who served in regular succession, ordained that *sub arcu principali a monachis vigiliae celebrarentur, et a presbyteris hebdomadariis missarum solemnia.*[2] But little by little the secular clergy at Rome ceased to take part in the celebration of the divine Office; so much so that Leo IV increased the limited number of festivals on which the priests were accustomed to join in singing Vespers and the night psalmody, adding to the traditional list Vespers on the Feast of St Paul and the night vigil of the Octave of the *dormitio* of the Blessed Virgin.[3] The hebdomadary priests on whom devolved the administration of the sacraments in the greater basilicas had been instituted under the name of *cubiculares* by Leo the Great and by Simplicius,[4] and they did not entirely disappear until long afterwards.

We know that towards the end of the tenth century there still existed at St Paul's a *schola confessionis venerabilis basilicae beati Pauli Apostoli,* the prior of which was a certain Leo, a layman who was also married.[5] In the same Regesta of Subiaco is also mentioned the Prior[6] of the *Schola Cantorum* of St Peter's, of whom we shall speak more particularly later on.

We must not, however, exaggerate this sort of rivalry

» *Epist.,* lib IV. Ep. 18 ; *P.L.* XXVII, col. 667-8.
1 Cf. *Lib. Pontif.,* i. 417, 421.
• Kerr, *op. cit.,* i, 10.
• *Reg. Sublac.,* nn. 112, 113. pp. 159. 160.
» *Op. cit.,* ii, 108. 112.
* *Reg. Sublac.,* n. 62, p 104

between the regular and the secular clergy. The very nature of things, and the conditions in which they found themselves in Rome under the single pastoral government of the Pope, prevents us from saying positively that any strong aggression on either side was an impossibility. Some have tried to read, as it were, between the lines of the Leonine Sacramentary and the *Liber Pontificalis,* and to see in those pronouncements against false *confessores* and in the increased numbers of the secular clergy such as we read of under Pope Sabinian (died 607) a proof of some secret struggle between the priests and the monks.

Something of the kind certainly did exist, but we are not justified in making things appear more serious than they were. Be this as it may, the number of the secular clergy at Rome could never have been such as to enable them to compete sucessfully with the magnificent monastic choirs of the great basilicas, formed of two, three, and sometimes even four communities joining together to sing the praises of God.

At St Peter's, for instance, Adrian I *constituit in monasterio Sancti Stephani kata Barbara patricia . . . congregationem monachorum, et statuit ut sedulas laudes in ecclesia beati Petri persolvant, sicut et coetera tria monasteria*—those of SS John and Paul, of St Martin, and of St Stephen Minor—*ut duo monasteria pro latere ipsius ecclesiae Deo nostro canant laudes.*[1]

The same Pope repeated similar dispositions with regard to the Lateran, and desired that the monks of St Paneras, who until then used to sing the psalms in two separate choirs, *in utroque psallebant,* should give up one to the two monasteries of St Andrew, founded by Pope Honorius, in order that they might sing the divine praises together.[2]

Afterwards, Paschal I added to the three Lateran monasteries yet another—that of SS Sergius and Bacchus, inhabited at one time by nuns.[3] Such grandeur of worship was only possible with the monastic communities, who, in association with the urban clergy, thus became the most faithful guardians of the sanctuaries of the city. The Vatican and Lateran monasteries especially distinguished themselves by their skill in the liturgical chant.

We know that the celebrated John, appointed by Pope Vitalian (657-72) to be the companion of Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop-elect of Canterbury, was a monk of the Vatican monastery of St Martin and Arch-Cantor of the Basilica of St Peter.[4] Indeed, it appears that the musical tradition continued for some time in the monasteries surrounding the tomb

[1] *Lib. Pontif.,* i, 501. [2] *Lib. Pont.,* i, 506. [3] *Op. Cit.,* ii. 58.
[4] Bede, *Hist. Anel.,* iv, 18 ; (P.L. XCV, 199).

of the Apostles, for we have the names of several abbots who were renowned for their liturgical compositions. *Post istas*—this refers to the Gregorian "Centone"—*quoque Catalenus abbas ibi deserviens ad sepulchrum sancti Petri, et ipse quidem annum circuli cantum diligentissime edidit. Post hunc quoque, Maurianus abbas ipsius sancti Petri apostoli serviens, annualem suum cantum et ipse nobile ordinavit. Post hunc vero, domnus Virbonus abbas et omnem cantum anni circuli magnifice ordinavit.*

These valuable records have been handed down to us by an anonymous *Consuetudo* of the Roman monks, contained in a codex of St Gall.[1] Besides giving us the names of these three Vatican abbots, the document is also valuable because it authorizes us to draw two conclusions of great weight in the history of the Roman chant.

The first is that the Gregorian origin attributed to these liturgical melodies in the Middle Ages must be taken in a somewhat general sense, since the biographer himself, John the Deacon, speaking of St Gregory's work, calls it simply *antiphonarium Centonem.* But although we may not attribute to the great Pontiff every one of the melodies contained in the Antiphonary which bears his name, yet he remains the chief representative of the art of liturgical music in Rome; for, besides his personal work in the putting together of the Antiphonary, he also left behind him two important schools—the Vatican and the Lateran—which carried on the same artistic tradition.

The Vatican school with its abbots, who were also archcantors and musical composers, not only proves nothing against the Gregorian origin of the Roman chant, but on the contrary bears witness to the existence of a celebrated and flourishing school in which were trained those *magistri sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae* to whom in particular Amalarius attributes the composition of the most beautiful parts of the Responsorial. The Roman talent had no wish to become buried in the "Centone" of St Gregory, so after his death it continued to keep alive and consequently to develop and perfect the scale of its melodies. The alterations and successive emendations by the Vatican of these musical compositions *per anni circulum* are not, then, symptoms of decadence, but a sign of genuine vitality.

It is well known that in the first centuries the office of cantor underwent the same changes as those which befell the ecclesiastical chant. In the fourth and fifth centuries bishops and deacons sometimes filled this office.[3] But later, when the

[1] Anonym. Sangall., in Gerbert, *op cit.*
[*] *Cf.* Batiffol, *History of the Roman Breviary,* English tr., pp. 33^.

simplicity of the ancient melodies was displaced in Rome in favour of a less monotonous and more melodious form of chant, the difficulty of its execution necessitated, in the time of Celestine I (423-32), the institution of regular schools of music. The idea was not a new one, for Julian the Apostate, during the brief restoration of the pagan religion which took place in his reign, had already conceived the plan of establishing in every city schools for training boy singers as a support to the choirs. The decree addressed to Ecdicius, Prefect of Egypt, may still be seen, ordering the foundation of such a school of sacred music at Alexandria: îépa$ . . . /ζουσικτ}?—that is, of that music which, according to Julian, purifies the soul. . . . ràs ^i^àç wb rijs #«iaç /x o ix t ik ^s Ka^apréj'Toç.[1]

We do not know who was the first to found in Rome the school of liturgical music, but it must certainly have existed before the pontificate of St Gregory, since Pope Deusdedit,[2] who died in 618, was brought up there from childhood. St Gregory, therefore, did not found it, but he probably reconstructed it after the outbreak of the plague. Indeed, he instituted two schools, one at St Peter's and the other close to the palace of the Patriarchate.

The *Schola Cantorum* at St Peter's consisted of orphans chosen from among those in the *Xenodochium* erected by the same Pontiff, and probably situated on the spot where there afterwards arose the church of St Gregory *de Cortina,* not far from the monastery of St Martin. Manlius, Alferanus, and others, on the contrary, held that the *Xenodochium* was near St Stephen Major.[3] The question is consequently undecided, but it appears far more probable that the school of the cantors was near St Martin, since John the Arch-Cantor, of whom we have already spoken, was himself a monk in that monastery.

A passage in the *Liber Pontificalis,* treating of the life of St Leo IV, is of value as helping to decide the matter. The biographer describes the childhood of the Pope, and relates how his parents destined him to the study of letters in the Vatican monastery of St Martin, where he received his religious and scientific education. *Hic primum a parentibus, ob studia litterarum, in monasterio beati Martini confessoris Christi, quod foris muros hujus civitatis romanae juxta ecclesiam beati Petri apostoli situm est, quousque sacras litteras pleniter disceret, sponte concessit.*[4]

This quotation from the Pontifical suggests the existence

[1] Julian, *Epist.* (Ed. Hertlein), p. 566.
[2] Also known as Adeodatus I.
[3] Cancellieri, *be Secretar. Basti. Vatic,,* iii, 6366,
[4] *Lib. Pontif,,* ii. 106.

at St Martin's of a college where youths were instructed in both sacred and profane sciences. Now this was precisely the character of the ancient *Scholae Cantorum* at Rome, for not only was the art of singing taught in them, but they also produced excellent priests, so that several of the pupils from the school of music, having filled the chief posts in the Patriarchate, attained eventually to the papal throne itself. These schools or colleges corresponded to the seminaries of our days.

The school of the youthful choristers of the Lateran was in the monastery of St Stephen, which was, therefore, styled *in orphanotrophio,* or *de schola cantorum.* The place was full of historical memories; close by stood the oratory of the Holy Cross, near the baptistery in which, according to John the Deacon, St Gregory received from on high the inspiration which led him to compile his Antiphonary. The couch on which the Pontiff, often suffering acutely from gout, used to lie whilst giving lessons in singing, and the rod with which he recalled the wandering attention of his young pupils, were still preserved in the ninth century in the little chapel dedicated to him near the *schola.*[1]

Sergius II was brought up as a youth in the Lateran orphanage, and when he was chosen Pope he restored his former school with great magnificence,[2] just as Leo IV did for St Martin *in Vaticano,* where he had once been a pupil.[3] In the *Liber diurnus* there is an anonymous papal document in favour of an orphanage which may, perhaps, be that of the Lateran. The Pope restores to the institution some property of which it had been deprived by the avarice of one of the *praepositi,* and he does this *ne cantorum deficeret ordo.*[4]

Besides carrying out the liturgical services in the basilicas and training the orphan choristers, the Roman monks sometimes occupied themselves in tending the sick in the hospitals. In the *Liber diurnus* we find several documents in proof of this fact. As a rule, however, the monks did not care to undertake such active works of mercy, for these would have distracted them from their special object, which was psalmody. The long night vigils also, the stations, and the frequent processions, would not easily have permitted them to carry out duties requiring so much time and strength.

The Vatican monasteries, which we adduce as being types of the other religious houses, seem to have held themselves aloof from the administration of the various deaconries which then existed at St Peter's; and if the monastery of St Martin

1 *Cf.* Armellini, *Le chiese di Roma,* II ed., n. 105.
2 *Lib. Pontif.,* ii. 88, 92.
3 *op. cit.,* ii, III, 130. 133.
4 *Op. cit.,* ii, 102, note.

is sometimes also called a deaconry,[1] this title is justified by the care and attention shown by the monks to the orphans of the Vatican *Schola Cantorum*.

Some historians, relying on the authority of untrustworthy documents, formerly asserted that St Gregory the Great was the first to exempt monasteries from episcopal authority. History speaks of no such general exemption, at least during the first centuries; but we hear, on the other hand, of special privileges of autonomy granted with ever-greater facility to this or that monastery. Such autonomy was by no means general in the eighth century, not even in Rome, since it required all the authority of Gregory III to obtain for the monastery- he had himself founded in the Trastevere the exemption which the Vatican monasteries already enjoyed : *Ordinavit secundum instar officiorum ecclesiae beati Petri apostoli segregatum videlicet a jure potestatis presbyteri praedicti tituli.*[2]

In truth, the occasion for such exemption of the monasteries from any interference on the part of the secular clergy seems to have been less appreciated, perhaps, in Rome than elsewhere; for we find a *privilegium* granted by Pope John XIX in the eleventh century, by which the Vatican monasteries were placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Silva Candida.[3]

Nor could it be otherwise in the Eternal City. In other places the monasteries, built in solitudes at a distance from the larger towns, exercised an undisputed authority over all the extensive surrounding country, chiefly owing to the large number of serfs and peasants who cultivated their lands. Situated far from the chief men and leaders of the cities, the abbots represented, in the eyes of the country folk, the highest, and, indeed, the only, power in the district. At Rome, on the contrary, the monasteries were small and relatively poor. The authority of the Pope and the power of the Commune left no room for any other dominion, nor could the monasteries ever enlarge the sphere of their influence nor lead a life wholly to themselves; consequently their history is devoid of any special interest; it forms merely a part of the history of the city.

The Popes regulated with prudent discernment the mutual relations between the clergy and the monasteries. They forbade, for example, priests to interfere in the internal affairs of the monasteries, ordering at the same time the wealthier houses to give to the clergy a share in the goods which Providence had bestowed upon them.

[1] *Lib. Pontif.,* ii. 23, 31. [2] *Lib. Pontif.,* i, 418.

[3] Kerr. *op. cit.,* i, 139. Near Rome on the Via Aurelia ; known also as SS Rufina and Secunda.—Tr .

The upkeep of the lamps in the basilicas of the martyrs was often a charge on the monasteries, as, for instance, at St Paul, St Cecilia, and St Victor on the Via Aurelia and elsewhere. The Vatican monasteries, however, were exempt from this liability, so that in the ninth century there were still *mansionarii* at St Peter's, whose duty it was to supply the lamps with oil.

The *Consuetudines* of the Roman monks, preserved in the Codex of St Gall, to which we referred above, mention these hebdomadary priests of the Vatican Basilica, and describe the order in accordance with which they performed their office: *In ecclesia beati Petri apostoli, presbyter septimanam facit, vel mansionarii qui lumen vel ornatum ipsius ecclesiae custodiunt. Die sabbati ora tercia consignant officia sua ad pares suos, et sic discedunt et vadunt in domos suas; et illi alii cum presbytero vel paris suos usque ad alio sabbato serviunt et faciunt similiter.*[1]

In a Avord, the relations between regulars and seculars in the basilicas had been determined by the Popes with such wise discretion that both parties, though living together, so to speak, were able, as a rule, to preserve unaltered the character and spirit of their respective vocations. Hence the marked difference which existed elsewhere between the secular and the regular clergy never showed itself in Rome. The sense of the unity of the Church was then so strong that it Avould hardly have been possible to imagine the existence in the same city of separate communities living entirely to themselves. The *monasteria* with their abbots, whether privileged or not, took an active share, not only in the liturgical worship, but in the daily life of the Eternal City. They formed a most important part of her hierarchy, and were present at the stations, the processions, and the councils.

At one time a doubt was entertained as to whether it was suitable that persons who, like the monks, had renounced the world should afterwards hold ecclesiastical posts, but the question was decided by Pope Siricius (385-98) and much later by Pope Boniface IV (608-15), who declared that those monks whose holy lives had won for them the reverence of the people might be freely raised to the priesthood, the more so as St Benedict had never debarred his followers from such an honour.

Thus, in the early Middle Ages, the secular and regular clergy in Rome lived together, for the most part, in peace and concord, being directly subject to their common *Episcopus*—the fact that this common head was the Pope himself tended to make exemption in Rome all the less desired—both parties

[1] *Cf.* Gerbert, *l.c.*

subordinating· the special interests of either side to that far higher and truly Catholic aim, which consists in serving- God and the Church.

This intimate realization of the unity of the faithful in obedience to one bishop was so strong- in the ancient capital of the world that when Constantius proposed to the people of Rome that Pope Liberius (352-66) and the Antipope Felix II should be allowed to live in peace side by side, a tumult broke out in the Circus, to the significant cries of "One only Faith ! One only Baptism ! One only Bishop !"

The Popes remained true to their discreet policy when they surrounded themselves in the palace of the Lateran Patriarchate with secular priests and with monks indifferently, for they were both equally attached to the service of the *Episcopium*. These latter were in the habit of residing with the Pontiff at the Lateran as soon as they had been chosen to the subdiaconate. This custom appears to have been a very ancient one, for Gregory the Great in his time considered it impossible for a monk to continue to live in his monastery when once he had been ordained deacon.[1]

One day it happened that the holy Pontiff was called upon to raise to the diaconate a monk belonging to the community ruled over by Abbot Elias in Isauria. The Pope wrote at once to inform the venerable prelate of the fact, at the same time apologizing for not being able to send back the monk to him, as the Roman custom forbade that those who had been ordained deacon at the throne of the Prince of the Apostles should ever again leave his service. Doubtless, besides the ancient usage, other considerations must have inclined Gregory to keep the Oriental deacon near him ; his knowledge of the language and customs of his own land, for one thing, would be very useful at that time in the papal Chancery. However, in order to console the aged abbot, the good Pontiff, joking with him, as it were, granted him all that he had asked for in a previous letter, adding also a generous gift in money to help comfort him for the loss of his monk.

Those Popes who came originally from monasteries were disposed to lead within the palace of the Patriarchate the same life as they had led in the cloister. With the object, therefore, of creating a suitable atmosphere, they surrounded themselves preferably with monks, so that the episcopal palace assumed the appearance of a monastery. St Gregory himself did this from the time that he went as *apocrisarius*[2] to Constantinople; and many years previously in Italy, at

[1] *Epist.*. lib. V.. Ep. 38 ; *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 762.

[2] A term used in the Greek Church to signify a messenger from the bishops to the Emperor, or *vice versa*.—Tr .

Milan and at Vercelli, also in Africa through the influence of St Martin, St Ambrose, St Eusebius, and St Augustine, many episcopal dwellings were turned into monasteries.

It was from these " episcopal monasteries," as we may call them, that some of the secular clergy—who were very numerous about the year 1000—had the idea of living under a common *Regula*—that of St Benedict, St Augustine, and others—and from the very fact of their living together under the direction of an ecclesiastical rule or canon they came to be known as "Canons Regular." This was merely an adaptation of the ecclesiastical life to monastic discipline, when the strict practice of the latter was no longer possible, either because the cure of souls prevented it, or from lack of courage to embrace it in all its rigour.

As at St Martin of Tours, so also in Rome, at the Vatican, Liberian, and other monasteries, when their early fervour had passed, the Benedictine Rule was exchanged for the Canonical, in order to regularize their position, and this latter rule continued to be followed for several centuries by the monasteries at those celebrated sanctuaries.

The bringing of the monks from the cloister to the episcopal palace of the Lateran, when this was caused by ecclesiastical requirements and not from a decrease of religious fervour, was not, speaking generally, in itself a drawback at Rome; on the contrary, it was productive of good, so much so that many wise and saintly Popes came from the patriarchal residence. Stephen III and Leo IV, although they left their monastery for the Lateran palace as soon as they had been ordained subdeacons, may be cited as examples of the holiness and discipline which prevailed in that papal abode, once so prudently governed by Gregor}' the Great.

It is true that life at a court, even though it be a papal one, appears to most of us very much more attractive than life in an austere monastery ; nor do we desire to maintain that to be an inmate of the Lateran was precisely the same thing as being in the cloister; but, on the other hand, we must modify our modern ideas of a court to some extent, if we wish to form a correct estimate of the matter. At the pontifical court in those days monks and clergy celebrated the holy sacrifice together with the Pontiff; together they shared the night vigils, the day Office, the stational processions, and those of a penitential character, which then were very frequent and often carried out barefoot.

Many fast-days also had been introduced by ecclesiastical custom ; and if at times it happened that some lively member of the *Schola Cantorum* amused his companions—as in the famous Lateran publication of the *Coena Cypriani*—by his

witticisms at the expense of some older deacon, such a humorous work was by no means despised, even in the monasteries, as, for instance, at Farfa.

Life in a Roman monastery could not, as a general rule, be said to be excessively austere; the very fact of dwelling in the city prevented this. In the history of the murderous factions which distracted Rome from the eighth to the eleventh century we find the monasteries themselves involved more than once in the disturbances that occurred, and it became the custom to shut up by force in a monastery those persons whom it was desired to keep in close custody. John the Deacon gives us very interesting particulars on this subject in the story of the monastery of St Andrew on the Clivus Scaurus, which he has introduced into his life of St Gregory the Great.

It is not difficult to imagine what irregularities and disorders must have been brought into the cloisters by party feuds in this manner. If, then, towards the tenth century the monks of Rome had lost some of their primitive renown, it was not entirely their fault, for they suffered from the repercussion of the blows which weakened the religious spirit around the papal throne; after all, they, too, were sons of the Iron Age.

Providence, however, did not fail to raise up truly apostolic men who endeavoured to bring back the monachism of Rome to that height from which it had fallen. Excellent results were obtained, and they would undoubtedly have been more thorough and more lasting if the surroundings had been more propitious, and especially if the evil had not been allowed to exist so long. It must also be said that the reformers St Odo, St Majolus, St Odilo, etc., were all foreign abbots, and that innovations from beyond the Alps seldom succeed on the banks of the Tiber.

It is not possible in this short sketch to enter into a detailed history of the various aspects of Roman monasticism. For the sake of brevity we have limited ourselves to general remarks, but before leaving the subject we will dwell for a moment on the rite of initiation to the monastic life, and on the funeral ceremonies which were in use in the monasteries at Rome.

He who was desirous of consecrating himself to the service of God in a *coenobium* had first to undergo a whole year's novitiate, during which period he read through the *Regula* three times, in order that he might thoroughly understand that which he was about to undertake.[1] When the year was completed, the aspirant who persevered in his resolution was led with great ceremony into the church, where the abbot, or

[1] ***Rtg. S.*** c. Iviii,

in the case of distinguished persons such as the Frankish Prince Carloman,[1] the Pope himself, celebrated the Mass. The novice read aloud in the presence of the monks, the clergy, and the people, a declaration in which he vowed in the name of God and of the saints whose relics were venerated in the monastery to be always faithful to his resolve. Having finished reading the document, he laid it on the altar. Then the prelate who was performing the ceremony—at Rome it was the Pope—recited three long prayers, to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, over the novice, who finally received the religious habit, and for seven days kept his head constantly hidden in his cowl, or covered with the CMCuZion.

The whole of this ceremony is minutely described in the *Penitential* of Theodore, who, speaking of the ceremony of uncovering the novice's head by the abbot seven days after his profession, makes the following beautiful reflection: *Sicut in baptismo presbyter solet infantibus auferre, ita et abbas debet monacho, quia secundum baptisma est, juxta judicium Patrum, in quo omnia peccata dimittuntur.* These ceremonies are still in general use in the monastic orders.

The funeral rites customary among the Roman monks are also described in the same *Penitential.* The body of the deceased monk was carried into the church, and was first anointed on the breast with chrism. The Mass *pro dormitione* was then celebrated, after which, to the singing of psalms and responsories, the body was carried to the place of burial. When it had been placed in the grave, a last prayer was said, and the tomb closed with the salutation: *In pace spiritus N.N.* The holy sacrifice was again offered for the deceased on the third, seventh, and thirtieth day, and on the anniversary of his death, and his name was read out in the diptychs.[2]

These rites, according to the *Penitential,* differed from those observed at the burial of lay-folk, a fact which fully confirms that which we have already asserted, which is that monachism in Rome from its very beginning assumed a wholly ecclesiastical form, and suffered those disciplinary modifications which only appeared in other places many centuries later. The reasons for this difference or special character of Roman monasticism must be sought for in the unique historical conditions and surroundings amongst which it developed in the Eternal City.

When the Rule of St Benedict was introduced into Rome—almost immediately after his death—Roman monachism had been in existence for a long time, and had already assumed

[1] Eldest son of Charles Martel; he became a monk at Monte Cassino. Died 755.—Tr.

[2] Theodori Cantuar., *Poinitcnt.,* cap. iii; *P.L.* XCIX, col. 928 *sqq.*

its characteristic form. Hence the Benedictine *Codex* could only be introduced little by little into the Roman monasteries, and this through a compromise, by virtue of which the earlier traditions and monastic observances derived from other more ancient rules remained untouched.

From the first those who only afterwards took the name of Benedictines showed themselves very tolerant with regard to the observances of Monte Cassino. One of their most authoritative representatives, scarcely fifty years from the death of St Benedict, did not hesitate to modify the *Regula* in many ways; indeed, he erected his monastery in a place where St Benedict would probably never have allowed one to stand; that is to say, in one of the most frequented parts of the city. Thus the mission of the Benedictine Rule in Rome was not precisely that of taking the place of the existing religious forces, but merely that of blending them harmoniously together, at the same time giving them a powerful stimulus towards a more splendid development.

Looking at the matter from this point of view, it is significant that the monks at Rome during the early Middle Ages did not follow, when celebrating the divine Office in the basilicas, the Benedictine, but the Roman cursus.

Another cause which accounts for the special form that distinguishes and characterizes urban monachism in Italy must not be overlooked. The religious houses of the metropolis of the world were, as we have seen, many in number, but for this very reason they must have felt themselves restricted, both as to their extent and as to the number of their inhabitants. It was as much as could be expected if room were found within their enclosure for a small library; as to the garden, the mill, the various crafts which St Benedict desired to see, these must be looked for in the great abbeys which rise up in the solitude of the hills or spread themselves below in the wide plains.

At Rome these normal conditions of the monastic enclosure became impracticable amid crowded streets and within limited precincts. Nor would the Roman monks have had time to devote themselves to the various manual works prescribed by the *Regula*. They passed the greater part of their time in church; the liturgical service of the basilicas rendered other occupations wellnigh impossible. This circumstance, too, contributed to bring it about that at Rome the monks quite naturally came to form one with the Roman secular clergy, modifying their own rule to suit the exigencies of that form of canonical-monastic life which characterized their mission in the capital of the Christian world.

THE SACRED LITURGY
FROM TRINITY SUNDAY TO ADVENT

TRINITY SUNDAY

IN early times, according to the Roman rite, this Sunday, which followed the night vigil at St Peter's, was devoted to rest—*Dominica vacat.* But about the eighth century the Roman lists begin to mark an Octave of Pentecost—doubtless in imitation of the *Dominica in Albis* (Low Sunday)—with the Gospel Lesson (John iii, 1-16) relating the conversation of our Lord with Nicodemus concerning the efficacy of the working of the Holy Ghost in the sacrament of baptismal regeneration. Almost simultaneously there came into use the Gospel from St Luke (vi, 36-42), now read on the First Sunday after Pentecost. In the year 1334, however, both these passages became practically useless, owing to the institution of the new Feast of the Blessed Trinity, which was introduced into the Roman rite by Pope John XXII.

The idea of a special solemnity in honour of the mystery of the most holy Trinity, the foundation of our Christian faith, is a beautiful one, and the time appointed for its celebration—viz., at the close of the paschal cycle—is well chosen. It is natural that we should feel a desire to manifest the fulness of our gratitude to the Triune God who has deigned to accomplish the work of our redemption with so much pity and lovingkindness towards us. The eternal Father, for love of us, has been pleased to give up his only begotten Son to be the oblation and victim of expiation; Jesus has loved us *in finem*—that is, to the point of sacrificing himself for us; the Holy Ghost has given himself to us in so intimate a manner as to be called *donum*—the gift—because he witnesses to the love of the Father and of the Son for us.

Further, the revelation of the dogma of the Blessed Trinity is one of the mysteries which the Jews had only partly apprehended, but was not expressly revealed until the coming of the New Law. Phis mystery concerns the inward life of the Deity, and such secrets are not revealed to all, only to friends. I he doctrine of one God in three Persons marks the most sublime height of theological science, and confers on the followers of Christ a perfection and a dignity of so high an order that it may truly be said that this dogma constitutes the honour, the glory, and the salvation of the Church.

It is very fitting, therefore, that after the Holy Ghost has come to teach the faithful, throwing open to them the entire treasure of divine truth,[1] the Christian family should turn to the contemplation and adoration of the most holy Trinity, *in spiritu et veritate*,[2] thus fulfilling the chief and essential object of the incarnation of the Saviour and the redemption of the world.

As the Feast of the Blessed Trinity fittingly closes the cycle of the soteriological liturgy, so we also are baptized with the invocation of the Trinity, and close the course of our mortal life with the same invocation repeated over us by the priest at our deathbed and also at our bier : *Proficiscere . . . de hoc mundo in nomine Dei Patris,* etc. ;[3] *insignitus est signaculo sanctae Trinitatis.*'[4]

The Church has been moved by these high conceptions in the instituting of to-day's feast. It is true that the whole of the Catholic Liturgy is one continuous hymn of praise to the Triune God, and that the fact of dedicating a special feast exclusively in honour of this great mystery might appear almost to bring it down to the level of a mere devotion. But such is not the meaning of to-day's festival, which is not so much the Feast of the Blessed Trinity as the solemn yearly acknowledgement, in all humility and gratitude, of the greatest of all dogmas—the central mystery of the Catholic faith.

The antiphon for the Introit is inspired in its latter part by the Book of Tobias (xii, 6), and is a hymn of praise to God, Three in One, who reflects on creation, by means of the outpouring of his grace, the splendours of this Unity of essence in the Trinity of persons. For it is the power of the Father which gives to all things their being, according to the ideal archetype which he conceives of them in his Word. What, then, is the end which God has in view in creation? He creates through his Spirit—that is, through love—as the great poet so beautifully expresses it : " Amor che muove il sole e l'altre stelle."[5]

The verse for the Introit is from Psalm viii; in it are exalted the beauty and goodness of God, manifest in all the splendour of creation.

[1] *Docebit vos omnem veritatem*—" He will teach you all truth " (John xvi, 13).

[2] " In spirit and in truth " (John iv, 23).

[3] " Go forth, Christian soul, from this world, in the name of God the Father," etc. *(Ordo Commend, animae).*

[4] " In life ho was signed with the seal of the Blessed Trinity " *(Ordo exsequiarum).*

[5] '* The love which moves the sun and all the stars *(Paradiso,* xxxiii, last line).

The Collect is not classic in form, being somewhat diffuse and of inharmonious construction, but, on the other hand, its meaning is exceedingly profound. It reminds us, first of all, that almighty God has called the Christian people alone to the dignity of acknowledging the glory of the eternal Trinity, and of rendering due and fitting homage to the Unity of his essence. AVe therefore pray that by the merit of this unshakable Catholic faith we may evermore be defended from all harm.

In what manner do we give to the Blessed Trinity the homage which is due; that is, a perfect homage befitting such great majesty? The Fathers supply the answer: *per Christum,* who is the supreme Pontiff and adorer; *in Spiritu Sancto*—that is, in his grace and in his holiness, which he communicates to the Church.

Then follows a passage from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans (xi, 33-36), in which the Apostle, having touched upon the problem of man's predestination, rises in swift flight to the contemplation of the sublimity and surpassing excellence of the divine nature, which contains, in truth, the ultimate reason of all things. The last verse is a declaration of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, whose attributes are here made manifest—*Ex ipso* (this is the power of the Father), *per ipsum* (this refers to the eternal Word), *in ipso* (this designates the Holy Spirit of love).

The Gradual is taken from the prophecy of Daniel (iii, 55-56, 52), and is the continuation, as it were, of the Responsory which followed the Lesson from the Prophet in the preceding vigil at St Peter's. It gives praise to Jehovah, who, whilst he is so exalted that he sits enthroned on the loftiest wings of the Cherubim, yet penetrates by his wisdom, power, and goodness to the depths of the abyss. As in heaven the holy angels compose the throne of the sanctity of God, so on earth the Cherubim, on whom the Omnipotent rests, are represented by his priests, into whose hands he entrusts not only the care of his service, but his very self. " Blessed art thou, O Lord, who bcholdest the depths, and sittest upon the Cherubim, y. Blessed art thou, O Lord, in the firmament of heaven, and worthy of praise for ever."

Also sin itself—all the evil committed in this world—falls inevitably under this universal law of giving praise to God. It enters into the divine plan, whether because the punishment it receives in hell glorifies in a high degree the justice and sanctity of God offended by the wicked, or because evil, instead of thwarting the designs of God, may in his hands become productive of good, as when the fury of the persecutors of the Christian religion filled heaven with martyrs, or when the errors of the young Augustine prepared the way for

the future penitent who was afterwards to write his touching " Confessions."

The alleluiatic verse is the same as that of the preceding night, following the Lesson from Daniel. Jehovah is called the God of our fathers in order to show that their spirits dwell with him—he is not the God of the dead but of the living—and that he is in very truth of the author of the sublime Messianic promises made to the patriarchs and the prophets j

The short Gospel (Matt, xxviii, 18-20) contains the clear and explicit revelation of the mystery of the most holy Trinity, which our Lord made to the Apostles when he taught them the formula of baptism. Here we have the condemnation, given in anticipation, of all heresies, both ancient and modern, concerning the divine nature of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost. The administration of baptism in the name of the leather, the Son, and the Holy Ghost is equivalent to an acknowledgement that these three divine Persons, who adopt us therein as sons, whilst they confer on us one sole grace, have but one and the same power and divine nature.

The Offertory, like the Introit, comes from the Book of Tobias, and is again a hymn of praise to the Triune God, who, in adopting us as sons and heirs, has magnified his mercy towards us.

The Secret contains a thought on which we should meditate deeply. We beseech God therein to sanctify by the invocation of his holy Name the eucharistie sacrifice, so that through his grace we may become by our holy lives a perpetual oblation to the Blessed Trinity. This is the true spirit of the sacramental liturgy—that of making it a part of our own lives, and so sharing in the sanctity of that sacrifice, of which the Apostle speaks : *Una enim oblatione consummavit in sempiternum sanctificatos.*

The Communion is also from the same part of the Book of Tobias as that quoted above. We declare before all men the glory of the Triune God when we preserve the brightness of the divine image in our understanding, our memory, our will, and our actions.

In the Post-Communion we ask that the Holy Communion which we have received as a seal on our conlession of faith in the divine Trinity may preserve our soul and body from every form of evil.

It is necessary to distinguish carefully between *devotion* and *devotions. Devotion,* according to its etymological derivation, signifies the entire and irrevocable consecration of the Christian to the Blessed Trinity, to whose honour and glory he must direct all his desires, words, and actions.

Devotions, on the other hand, consist of particular acts of piety, by means of which devotion reveals, expresses, and nourishes itself. The one is essential and necessary, the others are relative and very often of a voluntary nature. The devotion of the Christian is solemnly affirmed at the baptismal font, and begins when the Blessed Trinity takes possession of his soul, in order to dwell therein as in a temple. Woe to him who defiles this temple and by his sins drives out the most holy Trinity from its dwelling-place !

Formerly the Roman Church, in imitation of the Eastern Churches, celebrated on this day a commemoration of all the saints—*Dominica in nativitate Sanctorum*—but about the eighth century the great night vigil at St Peter's, with the following *Dominica vacat,* displaced this solemnity, which was eventually assigned by Gregory IV to the first day of November.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
(“OCTABAS DE PENTECOSTEN”)

"In Nativitate Sanctorum."

We have already spoken of the reason why the station for to-day was primarily wanting. Outside of Rome, in the monasteries, wherever, in fact, the night vigils were not celebrated according to the papal rites, there was no necessity at all for this Sunday to be aliturgical ; consequently the following Mass found a place before very long in the Gregorian Antiphonary, although some of the Roman calendars record the Eastern Feast of All Saints instead. In later times, when the Octave of Pentecost caused the Roman Liturgy to defer for some weeks the solemn fasts of the summer Ember Days, this Sunday, with or without the commemoration of All Saints, took its place once more in the stational cycle, like all the other Sunday feasts, and the Mass appointed for it was favourably received also in the churches of the city. In the fourteenth century, however, the Feast of the Blessed Trinity displaced anew the Mass of this First Sunday after Pentecost, which is now said only on weekdays during the octave.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xii, which well expresses the attitude of a soul tried by God and tormented by interior darkness, by desolation, and by the fierce assaults of the enemy. Still, the soul does not lose hold of the confidence which it has placed in God, but utters a cry full of hope and faith : “ O Lord, I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart hath

rejoiced in thy salvation. I will sing to the Lord, who giveth me good things."

The same thought is brought out also in the Collect. Human nature wounded by sin is powerless, but it relies wholly upon God, who, through his intimate union with the humanity of Christ, is become our strength. May, then, the divine grace descend from the mystical head of the Body which is the Church and spread itself through the members, so that they may ever act in accordance with the will of God.

Oremus.—Deus, in te sperantium fortitudo, adesto propitius invocationibus nostris: et quia sine te nihil potest mortalis infirmitas, praesta auxilium gratiae tuae; ut in exsequendis mandatis tuis, et voluntate tibi et actione placeamus. Per Dominum.

The Epistle (i John iv, 8-21) speaks of the charity which God has shown to us in giving us his only-begotten Son " to be a propitiation for our sins." Charity is the universal virtue which has for its object God and all that belongs to him ; that is, our neighbour. Charity towards our neighbour is the definite proof of our love towards God. He who loves God serves him with a generous heart like a loving son, whereas he who serves God from fear is like a slave who does his task merely in order to escape punishment. Such a one, therefore, is not perfect in charity, and, being in such a state, cannot expect that complete pardon of his sins granted to those who, like the Magdalen, love, and love much, because much is forgiven them.

The Gradual comes from Psalm xl, and carries on the same thought as is seen in the Introit : " I said, O Lord, be thou merciful to me. I tremble, and this is the fruit of my sin. I have acted according to the weakness of my nature and am suffering the consequences of my evil deeds. Thou dost work according to thy divine nature, and the evil caused by my sin thou dost wipe out by thy mercy. O Lord, so that in the scales of thy justice my few good actions may not be overbalanced by the weight of my evil ones, do thou remember that I, who now am suffering and undone, did formerly show mercy to my neighbour when he came to me in his poverty and his distress."

The alleluiatic verse is taken from Psalm v, and seems to be a continuation of the preceding lamentation : " Alleluia, Alleluia, *y*. Give ear, O Lord, to my words; understand my cry. Alleluia."

The Gospel (Luke vi, 36-42) dwells upon the precept of brotherly love explained in the Epistle. The measure of the charity which we must show towards others is that of which we make use towards ourselves. God will not use different weights and different measures, but will treat us as we have

treated our brethren. Let us have no illusions on the subject. The Christian faith is to be illustrated chiefly by works of charity; for, as St John says, how is it possible for a man truly to love the invisible God if he does not show any love towards that living and visible image of God which is his own neighbour? Indeed, because poverty and misery can more easily touch the heart of the compassionate, so God, who himself has no need of anything of ours, has ordained that our neighbour shall be subject to many tribulations and necessities in order that we may be moved to pity, and may so have an opportunity of "giving to God," who hides himself under the outward appearance of the poor.

The antiphon for the Offertory, which was sung whilst the faithful presented their offerings for the sacrifice, is from Psalm v, and entreats God to hearken to our prayers. Why is this? Is it possible, then, that God would reject the prayers of his children? By no means, but sometimes his children, by abuse of divine grace, have rendered themselves unworthy of any special favour. In this case these unworthy children must first win back their Father's love before they can obtain the favour they desire. Otherwise it would be as though a criminal about to appear before the judge to receive the sentence he had merited were to have the effrontery to demand some special favour in its stead. Hence the prayer of propitiation must precede the prayer of supplication. In this sense the Church speaks in a beautiful Collect which we shall recite on the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost of "blessings which our prayer does not venture to ask," but which it leaves wholly to the bountiful mercy of God.

The eucharistie sacrifice offered by the Church for the living and the dead is ordained precisely for this necessary purpose of conciliating, first of all, the favour of an offended God, in order afterwards to obtain from him special benefits. Through the merits of the blood of the Redeemer, the divine justice offended by the sinner is appeased, and God deigns to receive the prayer of the penitent and contrite sinner.

God, then, always listens to our prayers, but, according to the order which he has established, they must first have, where required, a propitiatory efficacy, so as to obtain the favour which they actually implore—*Qui non placet, non placat.* Perhaps, sometimes, when we grow weary of waiting for long-deferred graces, we do not sufficiently realize the relations that exist between the propitiatory and the supplicatory effect of prayer. The spirit of the Church is quite otherwise, and this is especially evident with regard to intercessions for the dead.

Although one single Mass more than suffices to deliver a soul, or, indeed, all the souls from Purgatory, yet the Church

recommends that we should multiply our prayers and our Masses, for the reason that, as we cannot tell in what measure the divine justice applies these suffrages to the souls in Purgatory for whom we pray, it is a very helpful thing to offer first to God the propitiatory effect of our prayers, in order that, being thus appeased, he may then apply to those souls both the satisfaction and the propitiation wrought by our suffrages.

The practice of the Church is confirmed by the revelations made to some of the saints. St Gertrude, for instance, not infrequently mentions instances of souls of the departed who appeared at first as though sunk in profound darkness and deprived of all assistance from suffrages. The saint prays, applies to them the merits of the Mass, and those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and now the same souls appear to her once more rejoicing and clothed in seemly garments. They have not yet, however, been admitted to the Beatific Vision, but through the intercession of the saint they have been allow'ed to participate in the effect of the suffrages of the Church, for which they express to her their deep gratitude.

The Secret is of a general character. In it we pray God favourably to receive our oblation. Thus we see the sacrificial aspect of the Mass clearly affirmed by the ancient liturgical formulas, in contradiction to the bold denials of Protestants and heretical modernists. The help, or constant *subsidium,* which is here invoked is not merely the help of grace, but it includes also its eventual transformation into the brightness of that glory which is truly inexhaustible and eternal.

The Communion is derived from Psalm ix. The oppression which bowed down the soul as it first approached the altar of God has been removed. By the merits of the sacrifice God is once more appeased and kindly disposed ; he restores it to grace, and in Holy Communion draws it near to his heart. Therefore the faithful soul lifts up its voice in a hymn of thanksgiving and cries : " I will relate all thy wonders. I will be glad and rejoice in thee ; I will sing to thy name, O most high."

The Post-Communion is short and incisive : " Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that, filled with so great gifts "—all the fruits of Holy Communion which, in their turn, like life-giving seeds, will bring forth other fruits in eternal glory, the final resurrection of the body, the conformity of our glorified humanity with that of Jesus Christ, and so forth—we may ever retain a sense of tender gratitude, so that our life may become in practice—that is, through our good works—a continual Eucharist, a never-ending thanksgiving.

Many of the saints found the greatest comfort at the hour

of death in the thought that they had always been merciful to their fellow-men, from which they justly concluded that the divine Judge would not show them less mercy than they had shown towards others.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI)

In ancient times it was customary to offer three Masses on Maundy Thursday—one for the reconciliation of penitents, one for the consecration of the holy oils, and a third *in Coena Domini* to celebrate the institution of the Holy Eucharist. The Blessed Sacrament of the altar was, as it were, the central point of the ancient Liturgy of that solemn day; so much so that it was called *dies paschalis,* since our true Pasch is Jesus in the Eucharist, immolated for us, and become our sacrifice and our spiritual food.

Later, however, the solemnity decreased in splendour, as the fervour of the faithful cooled ; the rites of General Communion and of the consecration of the holy oils were united in a single early Mass, and the Christian mind, intent on meditating on the Passion of the Saviour, no longer succeeded in impressing with the same force and clearness on the institution of the paschal sacrifice the solemnity of that memorable day—*Natale Colitis.* From this circumstance arose the need of a special feast of the *Sanctissima Eucharistia*—especially on account of the heresies which arose denying the truth of this mystery—so this feast was instituted by Urban IV in 1264, and extended by Clement V to the whole Church.

The Office of the Blessed Sacrament is a masterpiece of theological doctrine, of devotion, and of literary taste; it is the work of St Thomas Aquinas, who, however, from humility and love for liturgical tradition, made use in part of the antiphons, lessons, and responsories already in use in certain particular Churches. The procession after the Mass did not become obligatory until the fifteenth century.

The Introit is the same as that for Monday in Whitsun Week. The " fat of wheat " of which the Psalmist here speaks (Ps. Ixxx) is the sacred body of our Lord Jesus Christ, fashioned by the Holy Ghost from the most pure blood of an Immaculate Virgin. It is the " fat of wheat " because its hypostatic union with the nature of the Word raises this humanity high above all other creatures; it is in very truth

the cause of our being- and the end and aim of all creation, so that it was possible for Tertullian to assert that the divine Creator, whilst he moulded the form of Adam from the clay, contemplated at the same time his model, Christ, standing- before him in the spirit.

The Collect is a gem of profound theology combined with incisive brevity of language and nobility of expression. From it, too, we see that St Thomas was not only a theologian, but that he possessed a high degree of literary taste, and had, as it were, assimilated the liturgical style of the Church. Those collects which were composed in the later centuries of the Middle Ages are much inferior both in their conception and in the elegance of their form, whereas this Collect concerning the Blessed Sacrament is almost classic in its composition. The grace and skill with which the author has succeeded in condensing a whole treatise on the Sacrament of the Altar in a few well-chosen phrases proves his genius and enhances its value.

" O God, who under a wonderful sacrament "—wonderful because, unlike the other sacraments, which only give grace at the moment of their reception, the Eucharist contains the author of grace himself, who under the eucharistie Veil prolongs his presence amongst us beyond the actual offering of the sacrifice or the moment of Communion—" hast left us a memorial of thy Passion "—for the sacrifice of the altar, unbloody but true and real, commemorates the bloody sacrifice of Calvary, of which it is the mystical continuation and whose merits it communicates to us.

Jesus has willed to institute the Holy Eucharist under the form of a sacrifice, in order thereby to satisfy his love; and being no longer able, after his resurrection, to immolate himself daily and hourly in bodily suffering for us, he has ordained that the merits of his Passion and death shall be continually applied to our souls, and that his ministers, the priests, shall offer him up unceasingly on the altar in an unbloody manner to his Father for the salvation of mankind until the day of his final coming to judge the world. Nor is this all. As the act which appeals to the human heart most deeply, and shows most clearly the love of Jesus for men, is precisely the mystery of his death upon the cross, so almighty God has disposed that this immolation shall not be merely an event which took place in the remote ages of history, and consequently now no longer making the same profound impression on men's minds, but that, on the contrary, this act of his greatest love for his creatures shall be unceasingly renewed upon the altar.

The Collect continues thus : " Grant us, we beseech thee, so to venerate the sacred mysteries of thy body and blood that

we may evermore feel within us the fruit of thy redemption." St Thomas, in a phrase of classic beauty, calls the Holy Eucharist " the mysteries of the body and blood of the Lord," because here is no mere bare commemoration of Calvary, but the actual presence of that body and that blood which, as he hung upon the cross, represented the price of our redemption. St Augustine finely terms the Mass : *Sacrificium pretii nostri.* The special fruit which the Church teaches us to pray for to-day is devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, a devotion which must not consist only in prayers and processions, but primarily in acquiring and preserving within us the grace and efficacy of this Victim of our redemption.

The Lesson is from the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (xi, 23-29) containing the narrative of the institution of the Eucharist, and warns us of the heavy penalties to which those expose themselves who receive the Blessed Sacrament unworthily. Experience teaches us that whilst nothing is of greater benefit to the soul than frequent Communions received with proper dispositions, so nothing exposes a man more to increased hardness of heart and final separation from God than sacrilegious Communions, especially when they form a long chain of repeated profanations. St Paul, in order to make clear to us the horror of so doing, says that such a man " eateth and drinketh his own condemnation," and by this he wished to point out that, as food is changed into the substance of him who eats it, so the profaner of the Holy Eucharist is so filled and pervaded by the malediction of God that, in a manner, it penetrates his bones and marrow and flows through all his veins.

The Gradual (from Psalm cxliv) is that of the Thursday after the third Sunday in Lent. Our Lord, who at Cana had said to his Mother that the time was not yet come to give to the human race that mystical wine to which she alluded, and of which that transformed by him at the wedding feast was only a figure, now in the fulness of time gives to the Christian people a truly divine food and beverage which carry on through the ages of the Church's history the mysteries of redemption accomplished.

The alleluiatic verse is derived from to-day's Gospel : " My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." These two clear utterances of Christ contain an anticipatory condemnation of the various heresies which have arisen denying the real presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and reducing the Holy Eucharist to a mere symbol. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood," said Jesus, " abideth in me and I in him." I in him, and he in me, because the Blessed Sacrament shall be as a seal of my divine nature, impressed on his soul and on his body to conform them to

me. Holy Communion, whilst it nourishes his soul by charity, causing him to share in my life, will also render him strong against the assaults of the enemy, who will not be able to separate him from me.

The glorious Sequence of St Thomas Aquinas follows, in which the entire Catholic doctrine concerning the Holy Eucharist is summed up. It was no easy matter to give a suitable poetic form to a theme which required the most precise and clear theological language; but the genius of St Thomas was equal to the task.

Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem,
lauda ducem et pastorem
in hymnis et canticis.

Sion, lift thy voice and sing ;
Praise thy Saviour and thy King;
Praise with hymns thy Shepherd true.

Quantum potes, tantum aude :
quia major omni laude,
nec laudare sufficis.

Strive thy best to praise him well,
Yet doth he all praise excel;
None can ever reach his due.

Laudis thema specialis,
panis vivus et vitalis
hodie proponitur.

Sec to-day before us laid
The living and life-givinç bread,
Theme for praise and joy profound.

Quem in sacrae mensa coenae,
turbae fratrum duodenae
datum non ambigitur.

The same which at the sacred board
Was, by our incarnate Lord,
Given to his apostles round.

Sit laus plena, sit sonora,
sit jucunda, sit decora,
mentis jubilatio.

Let the praise be loud and high;
Sweet and tranquil be the joy
Felt to-day in every breast

Dies enim solemnis agitur,
in qua mensae prima recolitur
hujus institutio.

On this festival divine.
Which records the origin
Of the glorious Eucharist.

In hac mensa novi Regis,
Novum Pascha novae legis
Phase vetus terminat.

On this table of the King,
Our new paschal offering
Brings to end the olden rite.

Vetustatem novitas,
umbram fugat veritas,
noctem lux eliminat.

Here, for empty shadows fled,
Is reality instead ;
Here, instead of darkness, light.

Quod in coena Christus gessit,
faciendum hoc expressit
in sui memoriam.

IIis own act, at supper seated.
Christ ordained to be repeated
In his memory divine;

Docti sacris institutis,
panem, vinum in salutis
consecramus hostiam.

Wherefore now, with adoration,
We the host of our salvation
Consecrate from bread and wine.

Dogma datur Christianis,
quod in carnem transit panis,
et vinum in sanguinem.

Hear what holy Church maintaineth,
That the bread its substance changeth
Into flesh, the wine to blood.

Quod non capis, quod non vides,
animosa firmat fides,
praeter rerum ordinem.

Doth it pass thy comprehending?
Faith, the law of sight transcending,
Leaps to things not understood.

Sub diversis speciebus,
signis tantum, et non rebus,
latent res eximiae.

Here, beneath these signs, are hidden
Priceless things, to sense forbidden;
Signs, not things, are all we see;

Caro cibus, sanguis potus,
manet tamen Christus totus
sub utraque specie.

Flesh from bread, and blood from wine,
Yet is Christ in either sign,
All entire, confessed to be.

A sumente non concisus,
non confractus, non divisus:
integer accipitur.

They, too, who of him partake,
Sever not, nor rend, nor break,
But entire their Lord receive.

Sumit unus, sumunt mille:
quantum isti, tantum ille:
nec sumptus consumitur.

Whether one or thousands eat,
All receive the self-same meat,
Nor the less for others leave.

Sumunt boni, sumunt mali:
sorte tamen inaequali,
vitae, vel interitus.

Both the wicked and the good
Eat of this celestial food;
But with ends how opposite!

Mors est malis, vita bonis:
vide paris sumptionis
quam sit dispar exitus.

Here 'tis life, and there 'tis death,
The same, yet issuing to each
In a difference infinite.

Fracto demum Sacramento,
ne vacilles, sed memento
tantum esse sub fragmento
quantum toto tegitur.

Nor a single doubt retain,
When they break the host in twain
But that in each part remains
What was in the whole before;

Nulla rei fit scissura:
signi tantum fit fractura:
qua nec status, nec statura
signati minuitur.

Since the simple sign alone
Suffers change in state or form,
The signified remaining one
And the same for evermore.

Ecce panis Angelorum,
factus cibus viatorum:
vere panis filiorum,
non mittendus canibus.

Lo! upon the altar lies,
Hidden deep from human eyes,
Bread of angels from the skies.
Made the food of mortal man:

In figuris praesignatur,
cum Isaac immolatur:
agnus Paschae deputatur
datur manna patribus.

Children's meat, to dogs denied;
In old types foresignified:
In the manna heaven-supplied,
Isaac, and the paschal Lamb.

Bone pastor, panis vere,
Jesu, nostri miserere:
tu nos pasce, nos tuere:
tu nos bona fac videre
in terra viventium.

Jesu! Shepherd of the sheep!
Thou thy flock in safety keep.
Living Bread! thy life supply
Strengthen us, or else we die
Fill us with celestial grace:

Tu, qui cuncta ecis et vales,
qui nos pascis hic mortales :
tuos ibi commensales,
qui nos pascis hic mortales :
fac sanctorum civium. Arnen.
Alleluia.

Thou, who feedest us below !
Source of all we have or know !
Grant that with thy saints above,
Sitting at the feast of love,
We may sec thee face to face.
Amen.
Alleluia.

In the Gospel for to-day, taken from St John (vi, 56-59) we have the words in which our Lord explained to the inhabitants of Capharnaum the spiritual effects of the eucharistie food. As the Father from all eternity engenders the Son from his own substance in the splendour of his sanctity, and shares with him his own life, so Jesus in the Eucharist transforms the soul into himself, as St Augustine explains it—*Non mutabis me in te, sed tu mutaberis in me*—and by means of his grace endues it with his own life. The devout soul then lives and yet does not live, in the same manner as Jesus in the Eucharist immolates himself as the victim and yet lives in glory. The soul no longer lives to itself, because with Christ it dies to the old Adam ; but at the same time this mystical death does not in any way deprive it of its desire to live, since it lives in Christ by a life which is entirely holy and worthy of God. This was the experience of St Paul when he wrote : " I live, but it is no longer I who live, but Christ who liveth in me."

The Offertory comes from Leviticus (xxi, 6), and speaks of the sublime sanctity required by the priest so that he might approach the altar worthily, and offer up amid clouds of incense the " loaves of proposition," themselves a symbol of the Eucharist. If, therefore, almighty God demanded so high a degree of holiness in those who were to fulfil a merely figurative and symbolical ministry, what must not be the sanctity of the priests of the New Law, who are called to consecrate by the words they utter the mystery of the body and blood of the Lord, to offer it up to God, and to administer it to the people for the remission of their sins?

The Secret is exceedingly beautiful, and is inspired by the celebrated passage from St Paul, wherein the single eucharistie bread of which all partake, and the single consecrated chalice to which all the faithful approach their lips, are manifested as symbols of that unity of faith and love which unites all the members of the mystical body of the Church, who, in the words of Tertullian, are all nourished at the same divine banquet.

The Preface is identical with that of Christmas, because the Holy Eucharist is for us the continuation of the grace of the Incarnation and of the bodily presence of Christ on earth.

The antiphon for the Communion—contrary to the classical

traditions of the Liturgy, which prescribe that this sung portion of the Mass should be derived from the Psalter or from the Gospel—is taken from the Epistle to the Corinthians. The Apostle recalls therein the fact that the eucharistie sacrifice is a commemoration of the death of Christ. In early days, indeed, the faithful who were offering the sacrifice participated in the Victim immolated, so that ordinarily only the sick communicated out of the Mass. St Paul here unites the two conceptions of Communion and of a sacrificial commemoration of the death of Christ; because, although according to the strict theological sense the eucharistie sacrifice is accomplished at the moment of consecration, yet the partaking of it by him who offers it is an integral part *of* the sacrificial act. It is because of this that in the Mass the consecrating priest is obliged to receive the sacred mysteries, even though the faithful who are present make only a spiritual Communion.

The Post-Communion speaks of another fruit of the Holy Eucharist besides that of peace and brotherly concord as expressed in the Secret, and this is a special right to the possession of God. This right is founded on the faithfulness of God and on the foretaste or anticipation of himself, which he grants to us in this life when he gives himself entirely to us in Holy Communion.

The Blessed Sacrament is the supreme proof of the love of God. For this reason, among Oriental Christians it is often reserved for the sick in a golden dove, the symbol of the Holy Ghost—that is, of divine love. From this special character of the Eucharist, and from the link which exists between it and the sanctifying action of the Paraclete, it is easy to understand what a deadly sin he commits who approaches it sacrilegiously, or in any other way profanes this Holy of Holies. Further, Jesus desires to give us in Holy Communion a pledge of eternal life as an anticipation of our beatific vision of him in heaven. What a grief is it, then, for his Sacred Heart when, by treachery like that of Judas and his followers, the Bread of Life sometimes becomes a cause of condemnation and death !

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS CHRISTI (SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST)

Station at St Lawrence or at the Holy Apostles.

It seems that at the time of St Gregory the Sundays after Pentecost had no fixed stational assembly, since on this day the holy Pontiff celebrated the station sometimes at St Lawrence and sometimes at the Basilica of SS Philip and James. Of the two Gospel homilies pronounced by him on these occasions, only the first has reference to the Gospel for to-day given in the Missal, whilst the other, on the parable of Dives and Lazarus, no longer corresponds with the actual order of the Lessons. It is probable that Gregory himself, before deciding on a definite reform of the Roman Liturgy, employed some time in making alterations and experiments of which the Roman documents have preserved certain traces.

When Feria V of Pentecost was still an aliturgical day in Rome, to-day's station at the famous Basilica of the Apostles had almost the character of a special feast celebrated in their honour after the solemnity of Pentecost, in imitation of that already held during the solemn Octave of Easter.

The Introit is from Psalm xvii : " The Lord became mv protector and he brought me forth into a large place : he saved me, because he was well pleased with me." This is the final motive of all that God does for us. He has no need of our adoration, nor does he find any good in us by which he is attracted to us. The good is himself. Because he is good, he desires our good; that is, he desires to be ours, so that his goodness, which is all good and nothing but good, for it is himself, may become our good, or rather our beatitude.

The Collect is overflowing with devotion and is specially adapted to this Sunday within the Octave of Corpus Christi : " Make us, O Lord, to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name; for thou never failest to help and govern those whom thou bringest up in the steadfastness of thy love. Through our Lord." How many deep thoughts are contained in these few words ! The Church alone possesses the secret of this sublime eloquence.

We begin by asking that we may have a constant fear and love of God's most holy name, having in mind the twofold element, material and spiritual, of which we are composed. Fear is chiefly, but not exclusively, of value for the restraining of our inferior instincts, whilst love is the true inspiration

of the heart and the soul. He who loves entrusts himself to God, who, because he loves us, desires our good, or, rather, that we should have the highest good—that is, himself. Lastly, we speak of a steadfast schooling in love, because the grace of the Paraclete tends always to purify our love more and more from whatever there may be in it that is base or purely human, and so strengthens the soul that it may live in the rarefied atmosphere of pure love which envelops the nuptial chamber of the divine Spouse.

To-day's Mass may be looked upon almost as a grand hymn of thanksgiving for the love of God. After the beautiful stational Collect, St John, the Apostle of love, reveals to us in the Lesson (i, iii, 13-18) the sublime mysteries of divine charity. The love of God communicates to us the life of Jesus Christ, and finds its natural expression in charity towards our neighbour. He who does not love cannot share in this life of Christ, but abides in the corruption of death. In order to keep this fire of charity constantly burning, we must feed it with renewed acts of kindness towards our neighbour, for love which shuns sacrifice is but a parody of love.

The Gradual, which used to be sung by the soloist from the steps of the ambo, whence the subdeacon had read the Epistle, is the same as that of the Friday after the Second Sunday in Lent : " In my trouble I cried to the Lord, and he heard me " (Ps. cxix). Why is it that God, before giving us of his comfort, sometimes waits until our sorrow reaches its height and misfortune almost overwhelms us? It is in order to try our faithfulness, to strengthen our spirit and accustom it to these forced marches by the tremulous light of the star of faith. Furthermore, he often waits for the extreme critical moment before listening to us, so that the glory of our deliverance may not be attributed to creatures, but solely to his invincible arm.

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from Psalm vii : " O Lord my God, in thee have I put my trust; save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me." The cause of this deliverance is the confidence which the soul places in God, a confidence which, if placed in human aid, often meets with disappointment, but which is never vain when it rests on God. Faith and hope, as theological virtues, anticipate in a manner the attainment of that in which we believe and for which we hope—*Spes autem non confundit,* as the Apostle teaches—for it is the Holy Ghost himself who nourishes this hope in our hearts, as a pledge of its glorious realization in eternity.

The Gospel (Luke xiv, 16-24) continues the instruction on charity begun in the Epistle, and relates how almighty God,

in the excess of his love, prepares in heaven a wondrous banquet of bliss to which he invites the entire human race without distinction of age or class. The Jewish people, who are typified by the great and wealthy of this world, for one reason or another excuse themselves from accepting the invitation, hence those who actually sit down at the heavenly feast are the poor, the maimed, and the humble, who represent the forlorn heathen races.

The Roman lectionaries of the seventh century assign as the Gospel for this Sunday the account of the miraculous draught of fishes, described by St Luke (v, 2-11), perhaps in order to prepare our minds for the coming Feast of St Peter.

The verse for the Offertory is the same as that of Monday in Passion Week: "Turn to me, O Lord, and deliver my soul. O save me for thy mercy's sake" (Ps. vi). Save me, not that I deserve this favour of thee, for by wandering away from thee I have wilfully cast myself into the abyss of sin. But thou dost not seek as the reason of thy mercy any possible goodness in ourselves, but art merciful because thou thyself art good. Save me, therefore, not for my sake, but for thine own, that I may glorify thee for having become my gracious Saviour.

The Secret speaks of the cleansing efficacy of the eucharistie oblation in freeing us completely from the bonds of this wretched earth, in order to raise us up, as with a powerful lever, towards heaven.

The Communion comes from Psalm xii, and expresses the gratitude of the soul which sings to the Lord because he has given it good things. What is the great good which forms the riches and the wisdom of God, the one object of his condescension? It is none other than his Word, his Christ, whom our merciful Father has given to us as the victim of the sacrifice. He, then, to whom Jesus does not suffice, and who seeks other comfort outside the possession of him, gives proof either of incredible folly or of unbounded greed.

The Post-Communion is similar to that for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. In it we beseech almighty God that the frequent reception of Holy Communion may ever help on and bring about the accomplishment of the grand plan of salvation which he has predestined for us.

It is certain that if God has predestined us to glory, as he first glorified Jesus, so he has also willed that the channel, so to speak, for the attaining of this eternal reward shall be that divine grace of which Jesus is the universal fount. Holy Communion, above all the other sacraments, has this special attribute, that it unites the soul directly with the author of all grace, with the fountain-head and source of all salvation and predestination ; wherefore we can understand how rightly the

sacred Liturgy urges our frequent participation in the holy mysteries, as being the act which more than any other helps to perfect God's design by increasing, in the words of the Missal, *nostrae salutis effectus.*

There is nothing in common between sentimental piety and divine love. The love of God is not satisfied with vain words and tender emotions, for it is a fire which cleanses the soul from even the smallest unworthy attachment to created things, rendering it strong, undaunted by any sacrifice, firmly established in God, according to the words of to-day's Collect: *" Quos in soliditate tuae dilectionis instituis."*

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

According to St Gregory the Great's Book of Homilies, the discourse on to-day's Gospel was pronounced on the Coelian Hill, in the titular Church of Pammachius. Since, however, the holy doctor observes in his address—the summer, a dangerous season for his health, being now over—that he is resuming his interrupted course of sermons, it is possible, in spite of the posthumous title of the homily, that it was delivered, not on the Third Sunday after Pentecost, but later in the year at some autumnal station held in the Basilica of the martyrs SS John and Paul. This is a further proof that the list of passages from the Gospels explained by St Gregory to the people does not always correspond exactly with that indicated in his Sacramentary. In some of the Roman lists of the seventh century the Gospel containing the parables of the lost sheep and of the missing groat is assigned to the first Friday after the Octave of Pentecost.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xxiv, the verses of which in the Hebrew text are placed in the alphabetical order of the initial consonants: " Look thou upon me, and have mercy on me, O Lord; for I am alone and poor. See my abjection and my labour; and forgive me all my sins."

The participation of the soul in the Messianic kingdom, promised to us again at Easter and at Pentecost, must be understood spiritually in the sense that grace already contains the seed of future glory. As regards our condition of pilgrims here upon earth, grace does not alter the fact that we are hard-pressed combatants, constantly exposed to every kind of temptation and assault. It is of this state of bitter conflict that the Psalmist here speaks. He cries out that he is alone, because the struggle is within, and the battle rages more fiercely in our innermost being, whither no human help

can come. God beholds from heaven our warfare, he realizes our trouble, he disposes all for our greater good, and finally rewards our efforts with the crown and palm of immortality.

The difficulties and tribulations of this present life have another advantage : not only do we gain our greatest merits through temptation, but the humiliation and labour which are its consequences form an effective means of expiating our past sins.

The Collect is less concise than usual, and has an almost oratorical tone. God treats us in the same measure as we co-operate with him. Without him nothing is stable ; also in the natural order nothing is holy, because the holiness of our actions is determined by their correspondence with the supreme rule of morality, which is the infinite sanctity of God. The obstacle or stumbling-block consists in the allurement which created things exercise upon our fallen nature, so that we often fail to rise to the highest level of good, but confine ourselves to a limited and merely external show of goodness.

Hence we pray God that—defending us from the fatal illusion produced by the glitter of worldly things, which we cannot altogether avoid, as many of them are necessary to us in our daily life—he will so guide us by his heavenly wisdom through the labyrinth of this life that such created things, instead of being a source of disorder and excess, may, when rightly used, serve us as a means of attaining to the treasures of life everlasting.

Then follows a passage from the First Epistle of St Peter (v, 6-11). The trials and temptations of this life must be borne in a spirit of humility and faith ; of humility because they are permitted under the mighty hand of God, of whom no creature has the right to ask, " Why dost thou act thus?" of faith because God never abandons the afflicted soul, and because suffering sends forth a fragrance which attracts the divine Spouse. The persecution of which St Peter here speaks is that of the Vatican pyres ordered by Nero after the burning of Rome. The Apostle alludes to it also in chapter four, verse twelve, comparing that fierce trial to a fire, in words which clearly refer to the cruel torments inflicted on the Christians by those dreadful human " torches " that lighted up Nero's festivals in the Vatican Circus.

The Gradual is the same as that of the Thursday after Ash Wednesday. He who casts his care upon the Lord, as Psalm liv expresses it, finds with him safety in danger, help in distress, comfort in sorrow. Men, too, promise all these things, but in the hour of need not one is sufficient to himself. How, then, can he help others? God alone is the universal Good, who suffices to all and desires to give himself to all.

Moreover, to hope in man is useless, if not harmful, for, as the Psalmist says elsewhere : *Vana stilus hominis.* Blessed, on the other hand, is he who leans on the Lord.

The alleluiatic verse is from Psalm vii. God is a just judge, strong and patient. He does not render justice every moment, since before punishing the sinner he tries all the resources of his fatherly compassion and mercy. Human justice is hasty in exercising its rights, whereas divine justice, having all eternity before it, leaves mercy free to act during this present life.

The Gospel (Luke xv, i-io) shows us the usual kind of audience that listened to the words of Jesus—publicans and sinners. The heart of the Saviour found itself at home, as it were, amongst them, and transfused into those unfortunate listeners the trust and the joy which filled it. Whilst he related to them the parable of the Good Shepherd seeking his lost sheep on the mountain-side, or that of the woman turning her house upside down in order to find the missing groat, he was truly accomplishing that of which he spoke, for at that very moment by those discourses in the open country or at the corners of the streets he was searching for the soul of the erring sinner.

God allows the angels in heaven also to partake of his joy over the penitent sinner, since the saints share in these feelings of divine compassion towards fallen humanity, the more so as man is called upon to fill those places in heaven left empty by the fall of the apostate angels.

The Offertory, from Psalm ix, is identical with that of Tuesday in Passion Week : " Let them trust in thee who know thy name, O Lord ; for thou hast not forsaken them that seek thee. Sing ye to the Lord, who dwelleth in Sion : for he hath not forgotten the cry of the poor." How gentle is the divine insistence with which God points out to us in Holy Scripture the conclusive reasons for putting our trust in him ! One would expect it to be quite the opposite, and that it would be a strange temerity on the part of the guilty to rest his hope on the mercy of the judge. Yet the contrary happens. God wills that we should hope in him ; he commands us to do so ; he threatens to turn his wrath *in filios diffidentiae.* And whereas all the years of our life are open to his mercy, he reserves only one moment to his justice—the decisive moment of our entrance into eternity.

The Secret is of a general character : " Look down, O Lord, upon the offerings which are made in supplication by thy Church ; grant that they may be ever hallowed and that they may be received for the salvation of those who believe." We should notice here the eminently social and collective spirit which inspires ancient liturgical prayer. We are not

referring to the sacrifice of the priest alone, nor merely to the offering presented at the altar by any single individual, but, on the contrary, to the fact that it is the whole Church which surrounds its pastor on the festive day, which places in his hands the bread and the wine for the Sunday sacrifice, and so participates through Holy Communion in the fruits of the Sacrament.

The Communion is taken from the Gospel of the day: "There is joy in heaven upon one sinner doing penance." Do we desire to increase this joy of God and his holy angels? Let us do penance ourselves, and let us endeavour by our example and our words, or at any rate by our prayers, to turn others from sin and lead them back to God.

The Post-Communion has a strikingly classic form. May the *Sanctum*—such is the beautiful name given to the Holy Eucharist by our forefathers—communicate to us the life of Jesus. May his blood wash away all our sins and make us worthy of the supreme grace, the last act of mercy which God reserves for us—our eternal reward.

The conversion of a sinner means that our Lord has looked with love upon one who hated him, and this act of infinite mercy causes untold joy to the holy angels, who share in the compassionate feelings of the Redeemer. The Gospel tells us that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner doing penance than over the perseverance of the just, for the reason that the love with which God deigns to regard a soul at enmity with himself appears the more wonderful the less it is deserved.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST ("ANTE NATALE APOSTOLORUM")

The progressive order of the psalms for the Introit shows us that these Masses of the Sundays after Pentecost formed originally a series by themselves, which now, unfortunately, has been disturbed by frequent breaks, which date from the seventh century at least. The Würzburg list of Gospels indicates that there were at Rome in the eighth century two "Second Sundays" *post Pentecosten,* one *ante natale Apostolorum* and the other *post natale Apostolorum;* after which the cycle continued with the *dominica tertia,* and so on. It is important to note that the Feast of SS Peter and Paul, like the other greater solemnities of the year, formed a chronological milestone from which the various weeks of the liturgical year were reckoned.

To-day's Gospel of the miraculous draught of fishes taken

by St Peter is assigned in the same list to the second Sunday *{ante natale Apostolorum),* and refers, perhaps, to the feast which Rome was already beginning to celebrate with still greater solemnity. We can hardly picture to ourselves in these times the devotion with which the *natalis* of the Apostles Peter and Paul was celebrated at Rome in the early days of Christianity. From all over Italy, even from the most remote provinces of the empire, bands of pilgrims arrived for this occasion, to whom Rome was the type of the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the martyrs.

The Introit is drawn from Psalm xxvi, and well reflects the mind of the Church during this period of combat and peril : " The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid? My enemies that trouble me have themselves been weakened and have fallen." This miracle, described by the Evangelists as having taken place when Jesus was made captive in the Garden of Gethsemani, is constantly being renewed in the history of the Church, wherein we find that all those who have made war upon her have always ended in disaster and ruin.

The melody of this psalm must have had a special pathos when sung by the terrified band of faithful Christians in the darkness of the catacombs. " The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?" Nero, Domitian, and Valerian have each been cast down from his throne by the hand of God. That Church which they sought to destroy stands still unmoved, and the morrow draws near when, from the height of the Vatican, she shall rule in the place of the Cæsars over all the nations of the world.

The Collect appears to pursue the same thought, as is seen in the Introit. Of very great importance to the expansion of the Church are the social conditions of a country. These are subjected to God in such a way that, whilst the nations arc agitated and disturbed by their passions, he orders all these events and turns them to his final glory and to the salvation of souls. We therefore join to-day in the Church's prayers, that the divine Providence may so dispose the course of human affairs that nothing shall arise to hinder the Catholic family from giving to God the united homage of its devotion. In other words, we beseech almighty God not to permit the return of persecution, because, although it might enrich the Church with martyrs, yet the normal life of the Christian community develops more freely during times of peace and goodwill.

The successive Epistles of the Sundays after Pentecost very probably also formed at first a series of their own, but

are now frequently interrupted. In the Lesson from the Epistle to the Romans (viii, 18-23), St Paul describes in powerful words the patient but determined expectation of all creation awaiting deliverance from the ignoble slavery to which the sinner has reduced it, in order to make good against him its right, now suppressed, of serving only to the glory of God. This is an obscure passage, but the main idea is sufficiently clear. As sin has degraded the entire creation, so will it be allowed even in its inanimate forms to have its part in the Messianic restoration. In what manner will this be accomplished? We cannot here enter into a long exegetical discussion; it is enough to note that even now, by means of the sacraments, matter is raised to the dignity of being an instrumental cause of the sanctification of man.

The Gradual, taken from Psalm lxxviii, is similar to that one which comes after the first Lesson on Ember Saturday in September: "Forgive us our sins, O Lord, lest the Gentiles should at any time say, Where is their God? Help us, O God our Saviour; and for the honour of thy name, O Lord, deliver us."

Long before St Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, had pointed out the difference between the salvation which those expected who observed the five hundred or more works prescribed by the Torah, and those who, like Abraham, were justified by faith, the Psalmist dwelt continually on this theme: God restores us to grace and delivers us from the punishment due to our sins; but all this, properly speaking, does not come about because of any right we can claim to the mercy of God, but *propter nomen suum*—for his name's sake. This is w'hy the Word incarnate walled to be called Jesus—that is, Saviour.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm ix, which is arranged alphabetically. Jehovah has prepared his throne and is ready to deliver judgement. He is the refuge of the poor man in his tribulation. This mysterious poor man of whom the holy prophets speak with so much insistence is Jesus Christ, the carpenter's son. The Father left him for a while in the power of his enemies, but on Easter Day he at length heard his cry and judged his cause, so that he who had been accused before Herod and Pilate was made judge over the living and the dead.

The Gospel narrative of the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v, 1-11) prepares the minds of the faithful to celebrate the feast of him who was chosen to draw' all men into his net. The other Apostles, it is true, lend their aid, but it w'as Peter who cast the net into the sea and who was rewarded with the wonderful draught, in order to show' that in the Church the supreme authority rests with the Roman Pontiff,

of whom the bishops and clergy are the obedient helpers and fellow-workers in the sublime ministry of the salvation of the world.

The verse *ad offerendum* from Psalm xii is the same as that of the Saturday after the Second Sunday in Lent: "Enlighten my eyes, that I may never sleep in death; lest at any time my enemy say, I have prevailed against him." This alludes to those spiritual illusions which are one of the greatest dangers to our interior life. Self-love and the vanity caused by our passions often give us a very different idea of ourselves from what we really are. Sometimes this good opinion is shared by a circle of flattering admirers, whilst we ourselves at that very moment may be in a most dangerous state in the sight of God. *Nomen habes quod vivas et mortuus es,* and all those specious pretexts by which we attempt to justify our irregular actions before our own conscience are merely a kind of deliberate spiritual short-sightedness which wilfully distorts our mental vision. 'This terrible disease of illusions attacks in preference devout souls who, from a certain spiritual pride, are more liable than others to disguise under the pretext of a mistaken mysticism that which is really a shameful turning back of the soul when on the road to perfection.

The Secret is a repetition of that used on the Saturday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, in which we implore God to bring back our rebellious will to himself and to his law, by the virtue of the holy sacrifice. God never coerces our free will, for otherwise the liberty of human action would be destroyed. He often overcomes our first bad inclinations by the power of his grace, and then he grants us to will effectively that which is right, in spite of all the hindrance and all the resistance of our evil habits, to which we may apply the words of the prayer: *Rebelles compelle propitius voluntates.*

The Communion is derived from Psalm xvii. In the midst of the vicissitudes of the world, in the instability of all things—*πάντα ρῦ,* as the philosopher has said—God alone does not change, but remains always a most faithful friend and a very secure support to all who trust in him. He is a refuge in time of temptation, because the mere invocation of his name puts the devil to flight. In a word, he is our God; that is, not a mere finite nor particular good, but all Goodness, which therefore fulfils all our desires.

The Post-Communion has nothing distinctive. "May we be cleansed, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the mysteries which we have received; and by their virtue may we be shielded." The expiation of sin is accomplished by means of the blood of redemption, in which the Lamb without spot washes away the guilt of mankind. The protection

against dangers is the effect of the increase of sanctifying grace, which in Holy Communion, by causing us to share in the life of Jesus, strengthens us, and renders us terrible to the Evil One. Of how great an abuse is not the sinner guilty when he perverts into instruments of sin and damnation those good things of creation which, according to the divine disposition, are intended to be the ordinary means by which he is to be raised up to God.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST (" POST NATALE APOSTOLORUM ")

In the Wiirzburg list of Gospels, that for to-day is assigned to the second Sunday of the cycle of Pentecost, after the Feast of SS Peter and Paul, which seems to correspond to our Fifth Sunday after Pentecost. This sort of Roman liturgical cycle in connection with the solemnity of the two Princes of the Apostles is well worth remarking, for it recalls the time when, after the commemoration of Easter, this was the chief festival of Christian Rome. Besides the innumerable crowds of pilgrims, there regularly assembled at Rome on this occasion all the bishops of the metropolitan province of the Pope, in order to celebrate with him the feast of the Apostles, and afterwards to hold the annual Roman Council, as we learn from ancient sources. Considering the great pomp with which the *natalis* of the Princes of the Apostles was observed at Rome, especially on account of its theological significance, it is easy to understand the appropriateness of instituting a liturgical cycle in preparation for so great a festival.

The verse for the Introit is taken from Psalm xxvi, as is that of the previous Sunday : " Hear, O Lord, my voice, with which I have cried to thee : be thou my helper, forsake me not, nor do thou despise me, O God, my Saviour." It should cause no surprise that the greater part of the Introit psalms express with much vigour the distress of a soul, which, fighting against its unseen enemies, invokes the help of the Lord. The peace that comes after a glorious victory is not for this life, which, on the contrary, has been described by the Seer of Hus as a time of hard military service, a time of test and trial.

The opening words of the Collect arc inspired by the famous passage from St Paul (i Cor. ii, 9), where he tells us " that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him." This great good is none other than

God himself, a good disproportionate indeed to our poor human nature, but one to which he himself raises us through the effusion of the Paraclete in our souls. When the Holy Ghost kindles in our hearts the sacred flame of charity, then all the treasures of the world cannot satisfy the ardour which consumes us. The soul in this state is plunged, as it were, into a crucible of love, in expectation of the moment when God himself will put an end to its martyrdom, by giving it at length that of which alone it has need—namely, the divine Good. Encouraged by such sublime promises, the Church, in the Collect now before us, invites us to ask for this gift of divine charity.

We should notice the words of the liturgical text : *Te in omnibus et super omnia diligentes.* The hearts of the saints, the true lovers of God, do not become like to a piece of stone, unfeeling and incapable of affection for created beings. Nothing is more false than this idea of sanctity, and St Paul, whose generous and ardent heart is revealed to us in his letters, gives sufficient proof of this. The vicissitudes of the Church, the fate of his friends and disciples, the treachery of false brethren, cause him the deepest emotions, but the charity of Christ always dominates the feelings of his apostolic heart, so that all he desires, purposes, and accomplishes is done *in Christo Jesu.*

The Lesson which follows comes from the First Epistle of St Peter (iii, 8-15). It is probable that the extracts from St Peter which on these four Sundays before the feast of the Apostles alternate with those from St Paul, thus disturbing the primitive order of the Lessons, are purposely so arranged that they may serve as a preparation for the coming festival. In the passage for this Sunday the first Vicar of Christ instructs his faithful flock how to guard by the practise of every virtue that treasure of benediction which it has received from its Lord.

The imperial power is in the hands of Nero, who burns, dishonours, and condemns to the stake all who believe in Jesus. The Christians, as Tacitus himself acknowledges, are involved in the accusation, not only of being the incendiaries of Rome, but also of being enemies and haters of the human race. The Apostle teaches them that they must not mind this, for Jesus, too, was accused of every crime, yet he suffered in silence, not threatening, but blessing his persecutors. If his disciples wish to follow his example, nothing shall harm them, since on the morn of eternity God will render to them a hundredfold all that they shall have lost for a while in this world.

The Gradual is derived from Psalm lxxxiii, and is like that of the Monday after the First Sunday in Lent. " Behold, O

God our protector, and look on thy servants. O Lord God of hosts, who makest thy power to shine throughout all creation, give ear to the prayers of thy servants, and stretch forth thy mighty arm to protect them and to cast down their enemies and thine own."

'fhe alleluiatic verse is from Psalm xx : " O God, who dost make use of thy strength to cast down the enemies of Jesus Christ, the true King, behold how he and his mystical body rejoice together and raise hymns of thanksgiving to thee. Not to us, O Lord, not to us sinful creatures, but to thee and to thy Christ be the glory and the merit of having delivered by this great enterprise thy faithful people from the slavery of Egypt, in order that thou mayest bring them into the kingdom of eternal salvation."

The Gospel, from St Matthew (v, 20-24), dwells with exceeding sternness upon the precept of brotherly love. Prayer and sacrifice, which should unite us closely to Jesus Christ, may sometimes have no effect, if we remain obstinately separated from the members of his mystical body. It is an essential condition of life and health for a member to be joined to the body ; separated from it, dissolution must follow. The spirit of Christ is in the Church and in the Communion of Saints. Let us, then, cling to this unity with our whole strength if we desire the vital breath of the Saviour to pass into us and communicate to us his divine life.

The Offertory, from Psalm xv, is also that of the Monday after the Second Sunday in Lent. All these chants of the Sundays after Pentecost are somewhat doubtful in the Gregorian manuscript tradition, and have been compiled with a view to forming a " centone."[1] " I will bless the Lord, who hath given me understanding : I set God always in my sight ; for he is at my right hand, that I be not moved."

This is admirably expressed ; in order not to err wc must always keep our eyes fixed on God, judging human things, not by reason alone, but by faith ; seeing them, not as they appear to our senses or our passions, but as they really arc in the sight of God. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance for the soul to practise the recollection of the presence of God, which accompanies it everywhere. For this reason the Church teaches us to recite in the morning Office this beautiful verse, which may also serve as an ejaculatory prayer during the day : *Et sit splendor Domini Dei nostri super nos, el opera manuum nostrarum dirige super nos.*

The Secret is very expressive, and alludes to the ancient rite of the oblations, when, at the stational synaxes, all the faithful presented their own offerings at the altar, in order

[1] Or " cento," a work composed of " scraps " in prose or poetry from a number of authors.—Tr .

afterwards to participate collectively in the eucharistie sacrifice, which in such a case was offered up for all. This was the ancient rule of the *missa pro populo,* which pastors of souls are still obliged to celebrate on festival days for their own flock : " Be appeased, O Lord, by our humble prayers, and graciously receive these offerings which thy servants and handmaids make to thee ; that what each offers in honour of thy name may avail for the salvation of all." It would be impossible to express more beautifully the efficacy of the Communion of Saints, of which the eucharistie sacrifice is distinctly the symbol and the pledge.

The Communion, from Psalm xxvi, describes the feelings of the faithful soul when filled with joy at possessing its divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. In those solemn moments it realizes the emptiness of all worldly pleasures in comparison with the joy which God reserves for those who love him : " One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." We can always remain present in spirit before the eucharistie tabernacle, even when the material duties of our state necessitate our being absent in body. Such was the practice of the saintly mother of him who wrote in the ninth book of his "Confessions"[1] : *Ad pretii nostri sacramentum ligavit ancilla tua animam suam vinculo fidei.*

The Post-Communion dwells on the fruit of Holy Communion : " Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we whom thou has fed with gifts from heaven may both be cleansed from our hidden sins and delivered from the snares of our foes." The connection which the sacred Liturgy here establishes between the boldness of the Evil One and our cowardice in falling into sin is a very real one. It is we ourselves who, by our sins, give power to the devil and allow him to have dominion over us. If we were more courageous in repelling him, he would have no power to harm us, as Jesus said of himself : *Venit princeps mundi hujus, et in me non habet quidquam.*

In order to pray well—that is, to raise up our hearts to God—our souls must first be prepared by being detached from material things. For this reason the Church is accustomed to set apart a period of devout preparation for the greater solemnities of the year, so that inward purification, assiduous prayer, penance, and devotion may dispose us to receive in abundance the special graces which God dispenses more freely on the occasion of the great feasts of the ecclesiastical cycle.

[1] St. Augustine, *Confettiones,* Book IX, c. xiii.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The series of Lessons from the writings of St Paul, which was temporarily interrupted by the Feast of the Princes of the Apostles, is resumed to-day with the Epistle to the Romans. Then will follow those to the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians, so that during the whole period between Pentecost and Advent it will always be St Paul who instructs the faithful of Rome at the Sunday stations. This teaching, assigned by preference to St Paul, is not without a profound significance.

Peter and Paul, the Princes of the Apostles, were called to carry out an enduring mission, which did not end with their death. Peter transmitted the power of the keys to Linus, to Cletus, to Clement, and to this day, in the person of Pius XI, continues to be the foundation-stone upon which rests the whole Church. Paul, as St Chrysostom finely observes, received instead from God the keys of wisdom, and was made the Apostle and teacher of the Gentiles above all others, the preacher of truth even to the ends of the earth.

In this quality of Apostle and teacher of the world he writes his letters and theological dissertations, which, next to the holy Gospels, form the most important part of the deposit of divine revelation contained in the New Testament. The Church, therefore, never ceases to nourish her spirit continually with the heavenly doctrine of St Paul, so that each day, almost without exception, in the Mass, the reading of the Gospel is preceded by that of an extract from the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

The Introit comes from Psalm xxvii : "The Lord is the strength of his people, and the protector of the salvation of his Anointed. Save, O Lord, thy people, and bless thine inheritance, and rule them for ever." This people and this salvation are to be understood, in the first place, in a spiritual sense, since we are speaking of the Church which the Lord has purchased with his blood, and has brought together from amongst all the nations of the earth, to make of it his own family and his own possession. The Church, knowing, then, that she belongs to God, is certain that he will defend his own against all the assaults of the enemy.

The Collect is full of deep thoughts. All good comes from God, therefore we here ask him to implant in our hearts love for his holy Name, so that we may sanctify by good and salutary actions this august Name of eternal salvation in Jesus, which he himself impressed indelibly on our souls in baptism.

We further ask that the Holy Ghost may deign to increase within us this precious spirit of devotion, which is his special gift. By means of this gift the soul feels itself gently directed, and drawn, as one may say, towards God and the things of piety; so much so that this same filial inclination towards him gives it the practical assurance of its participating truly in the divine sonship: *Ipse enim Spiritus testimonium reddit spiritui nostro quod sumus filii Dei.* May the Lord, then, by his grace, continues the Collect, in such wise foster and strengthen in our souls those good dispositions which he has deigned to place therein, and zealously guard them by the sure protection of devotion unto life everlasting.

The Lesson, from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans (vi, 3-11), connects the resurrection of Jesus with the sacrament of baptism. The baptismal font is, indeed, like a mystical tomb into which the soul descends to die unto sin, and thence to rise again unto newness of life with Jesus Christ. The Apostle here makes use of a striking expression—" We have been baptized; that is, immersed in his death "—by which he means to say that the tomb, symbolized by baptism, represents the Passion and death of the Saviour, in which we must participate, or, rather, reproduce in ourselves in such a way that life may become a continuous dying with Jesus to ourselves and to the world, in order to live by the Spirit in his resurrection, as is clearly expressed in the words: *Quod autem vivit, vivit Deo.*

The Gradual, which is from Psalm Ixxxix, is the same as one of those for Ember Saturday in Lent: " Return, O Lord, a little; and be entreated in favour of thy servants. Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation." O Lord, whose face has been turned away from us by reason of our sins—for, as the Scripture saith, *Mundi sunt oculi tui ne videas malum*—may the abasement of our penitence move thee to look once more favourably upon us. O Lord, to whom else can we turn in this unhappy state of delusion, to which the world with its false promises has reduced us? We thought that we had built our hopes on a firm base, whereas they rested on a broken reed. It has failed us, but thou didst hasten at once to our assistance so that we should not fall, and by thy grace didst show thyself once more to be as thou always wast in the days of our fathers—the rock of Israel *(lapis Israel).*

The alleluiatic verse is derived from Psalm xxx, and follows much the same train of thought as the Gradual. In thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded. All other friends and protectors may be deceived or may fail. Thou, O Lord, who canst never err, save me! Save me for the sake of thy justice and thy holiness, not for my sake, for

in me is nothing but sin and misery. Bow down thine ear favourably to me and make haste to hearken to my cry. Grant me the grace of humble and trustful prayer : for this I beg first, so that by its means I may then be able to ask for and obtain all the rest that I need : *Haec prima datur ut caetera impetrentur.*

The Gospel relating the miraculous multiplication of the loaves, taken from St Mark (viii, 1-9), illustrates the difference between the Providence of God and that of man. The latter does nothing but put obstacles and difficulties in the way of the favour which Jesus desires to grant to the multitude ; divine Providence, on the contrary, overcomes all hindrances and pours forth its graces without stint. How-much better is it, then, to put that trust in God which we so often foolishly put in our fellow'-creatures?

The multiplication of the loaves is a type of the Holy Eucharist, hence we often find in the ancient art of the catacombs, illustrative of the eucharistie banquet, representations of the seven baskets with seven loaves marked with a cross, such as were blessed and multiplied by Jesus in the wilderness. Indeed, the connection between the two miracles is very close. The seven loaves blessed by Christ in the desert, w'hich sufficed to feed some four thousand persons, symbolize Christ himself, who in the Eucharist nourishes all mankind unto eternal life with one and the same bread.

The same symbolism is hidden under the figure of a fish, w'hich was so w'idely adopted in the early centuries of the Church. The heavenly ΙΧΘΥΣ, of which the faithful partake, is the Saviour of the Saints, who, as the well-known epitaph of Pectorius expresses it, gives himself into the hands of his friends in order to nourish them with an immortal food, whilst they are still in this mortal life.

fhe verse for the Offertory from Psalm xvi and that of Sexagesima Sunday are alike. It speaks first of the grace by w'hich God guides the movement of our free will in the observance of his holy law'. The liberty of the human act has nothing to fear in this case, because the premotion of the First Being, who is Pure Act, communicates to the creature the power of acting and of causing the entity of its action in such a way that it belongs to it. It is therefore something intrinsic and connatural to the human will, for precisely in virtue of this prevenient divine concurrence it is able to produce the act and to produce it freely. Thus the inmost source of the liberty of the human will is to be sought for precisely in the nature of the premotion of God.

If God directs our will, and if we put no obstacle in the way of his grace, we shall certainly never stray from the right path. God will then listen more readily to our voice, if

we, on our part, will listen to his word. He desires to pour forth his mercies upon us—*bonum est diffusivum sui*—and only asks that we shall not place any hindrance in the way. It is, therefore, necessary for us to entrust ourselves to God and to give ourselves up entirely to him, allowing him to work his own will in our hearts.

The Secret has a certain air of antiquity, but has, perhaps, been somewhat altered, for Ambrose Autpert, Abbot of Volterra in the eighth century, apparently quotes it from a much more expressive version. For instance, where he prays that the Lord may himself place between our lips the most fitting words so that the prayer of the people may not be vain or fruitless, the Secret in our present Missal has adopted another version, which weakens the antithesis and becomes almost devoid of meaning—" that the prayer of no man may be vain . . . grant that what we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually."

With the exception, however, of this slight alteration, to-day's Secret is truly beautiful. The prayer of an entire people accompanies on the festal day the collective sacrifice which the Christian community offers up to God by the hands of its pastor. *Haec vis Deo grata est!* exclaims Tertullian in his *Apologia,* for the Lord is always present where *two* or *three* are gathered together in his name. He is then in the midst of them, he prays with them, and the prayer of Catholic unity and of the Communion of Saints presented by Christ, the supreme Pontiff, to the Father can never fail to be heard.

The Communion comes from Psalm xxvi : " I will go round, and offer up in his tabernacle a sacrifice of jubilation ; I will sing and recite a psalm to the Lord." We must not forget that Holy Communion differs also in this from the other sacraments—that it is not merely the *sacrum signum* of the divine grace which it infuses into us, but entails also participation in, and union with, the true and only sacrifice of the New Law, which Christ first instituted on Calvary towards the evening hour of the Parasceve, and which he now renews on our altars by the hands of his priests. This sacrifice, therefore, in which we have our part, especially by receiving the immolated victim, forms that act of perfect and conclusive worship which redeemed and believing humanity renders to the holy and undivided Trinity.

In the Post-Communion we pray to God that the eucharistie gift which we have received may not only purify us by its expiatory virtue, but may also strengthen us against the dangers of the future. There are three things to be noticed in this concise liturgical prayer. First it states, *Repleti sumus, Domine, muneribus tuis,* because the Eucharist is not

merely some particular grace, but is the fulness of grace itself, or, rather, is the source and origin of the grace which is given to us and becomes ours, thus fulfilling all our legitimate desires. What can suffice him unto.whom Jesus does not suffice?

The thanksgiving prayer goes on to point out the firstfruits of Holy Communion : *Mundemur effectu*—that is, the purification of our conscience in the blood of the Lamb without spot, who takes away the sins of the world. The second effect of Holy Communion is described in the words *muniamur auxilio.* This protection of the soul against temptation comes about in two ways; firstly, because the Holy Eucharist strengthens our mind, and through Jesus confers on it the plenitude and joy of the supernatural life; secondly, because the contact with the immaculate flesh and blood of the Redeemer extinguishes in us the fires of desire and restrains the violence of our passions.

The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves is also a symbol of the Holy Eucharist, for the reason that the distribution of the miraculous bread was not accomplished by the Saviour himself, but was entrusted to the Apostles, just as after the Ascension the distribution of the eucharistie bread was committed to them and to their successors. In both instances Christ works the miracle, and the Apostles are only his instruments. In the distribution of the miraculous bread this latter is multiplied in their hands as they break it and give it to the hungry multitude, so in the administration of the eucharistie bread, as St Thomas beautifully says :

Sumit unus, sumunt mille;
Quantum isti, tantum ille.
Nec sumftus consumitur.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

In the series of Introits after Pentecost the strange manner in which the order of the psalms is frequently interrupted is very remarkable. Thus, the Fifth Sunday takes its Introit from Psalm xxvi, the Sixth from Psalm xxvii ; then comes a gap of nineteen psalms before the Seventh Sunday, which has its Introit from Psalm xlvi. The Eighth Sunday takes it from Psalm xlvii ; then follows another gap of five psalms, broken by the Ninth Sunday with Psalm liii. Next we have the Tenth Sunday with Psalm liv, the Eleventh with Psalm lxvii, the Twelfth with Psalm lxix, and so on. How is this anomaly to be explained? Did the weekly stations of the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday originally form part of the

series, or had every day its own Introit before the time of Gregory the Great, and are the gaps which we now observe due to the entire elimination of the daily Masses from the Sacramentary and the Antiphonary? In the absence of documents we are left to grope in the dark, whilst admitting that the suggested hypotheses arc not lacking in probability.

Whatever may be the solution of this question, even if it should prove impossible ever to reconstruct the primitive scries of Sunday Masses, it is very important when making a study of the Roman Liturgy to acknowledge the remote antiquity of its euchological formulary, which appears to us all the more venerable because of its many *lacunae*.

The Introit is drawn, as we have already said, from Psalm xlvi, which preannounces the universality of the Messianic redemption, unaffected by any barriers of nationalism: "Oh, clap your hands, all ye nations; shout unto God with the voice of joy. For the Lord is most high, he is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth." "Most high" because his counsel of peace was incomprehensible to the devils, who were not able to thwart it; "terrible" because he defeated Satan in that supreme effort by which the latter attempted to extend his dominion over him, the Holy One—the bringing him to an ignominious death. *O mors, ero mors tua, morsus tuus ero, inferne.*[1] Thus by the mouth of his prophet Osee had God already threatened the Evil One, the sovereign ruler over all the earth, because our crucified Lord extends his peace-bringing victories over all peoples, enrolling them in his armies, not by force, but by persuasion, with the gentle arts of love.

Thus the service itself which man pays to God, whilst it is the only one befitting the divine majesty of him who is a Spirit and desires to be adored in spirit and in truth, yet at the same time is the one which best becomes the nobility and dignity of human nature, whose requirements it always respects. Faith, indeed, does not suppress man's reason, but rather raises it to inaccessible supernatural heights, and the love of God, far from doing violence to his free will, renders his act more free, more spontaneous, more forcible, since nothing can be more keenly and more worthily desired by the rational creature than he who spoke of himself to Abraham as *Omne bonum*.

The Collect touches particularly on the question of the relationship between the freedom of our will and the indeflectibility of the divine Providence whose designs cannot in any way fail. The sacred Liturgy, which is necessarily for

[1] Osee xiii, 14.

the people, cannot enter here into a theological dissertation concerning the reconciling of these two mysteries—the heart of man and the heart of God. Having, however, stated in the first instance that the divine predestination cannot possibly err, the Collect points out in plain and simple language the manner of its working. God wills our salvation. In order, then, to attain this end, he removes from our path all obstacles, and gives us all those graces which he knows to be necessary and efficacious for the ensuring of our perseverance in his, or rather in our, holy calling to eternal life.

In the passage from his Epistle to the Romans (vi, 19-23) the Apostle Paul, in view of the still somewhat uncertain religious position of those to whom it was addressed, tells them that he desires to put before them doctrines easy of comprehension, so as to inspire them with loathing for the depraved condition into which idolatry had formerly led them. The Romans were ashamed at the recollection of their former transgressions, but the Apostle, like a prudent teacher, does not spare them this shame, which in devout souls is always a source of humility and contrition. For this reason God sometimes allows his elect to fall into humiliating sins, like that of Peter's denial, in order that the consequent abasement of the soul, and the lively contrition which ensues, may be the best safeguards of the great gifts which God has in reserve for them in the future. Humiliation and contrition are, as it were, the safety-valves of the soul against the feverish heat of self-love.

The Gradual is the same as that sung after the first Lesson of the Wednesday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, on the occasion of the great baptismal scrutinies at St Paul's. It is from Psalm xxxiii. The royal Psalmist, by the prophetic light of the Spirit, sees the future generations of Christians who through his Son, the Christ, will look to him as the head of their race, as the patriarch of the redeemed, and as the depositary of the divine promises, in order to be instructed in the paths of righteousness. He cannot refuse to undertake such a mission, and he therefore initiates his office of teacher by instructing them in the fear of God, which is the beginning of all wisdom. This holy fear springs as a necessary' consequence from our knowing who God is, and what is the extent of his claims on our obedience and our devotion.

But even before learning to fear God we are invited to draw near confidently to him in order to be enlightened. This confidence is itself also a fruit of the knowledge of God, since those who know him not may find difficulty in approaching him. Those, on the contrary, who know that God is the common Good, the Good most suitable to every creature, that which each created being, by the very fact that he came

forth from the hands and and the heart of God, may acclaim as his own Good, those, indeed, who feel these things must inevitably be filled with a lively confidence in God.

The alleluiatic verse, which comes from Psalm xlvi, repeats the antiphon of the Introit. The "clapping of hands to Jehovah" might be taken figuratively to mean that good actions must accompany the praises which we give to God with our lips. Indeed, according to the well-known warning of St Philip, we must be careful that our devotion consist in deeds rather than in words. Of these latter we must be exceedingly chary, not only in order to avoid vainglory, but also because words are like the abundant foliage covering a many-branched tree; if all the sap goes out into leaves and branches, there can be no fruit.

The Gospel (Matt, vii, 15-21) teaches us supernatural prudence in discerning the ways in which God works. In order to judge of a person's disposition, the surest way is to consider his actions. Pious and devout words cost but little, and Satan himself can quote holy Scripture with no lack of unction.[1] What is of real consequence is that we conquer ourselves so that we may accomplish the holy will of God. In these days especially, when, as the Apostle foresaw, a false *gnosis* opposes self-styled *magistros prurientes auribus* to the traditional Catholic doctrine, the judgement we form is of very great importance to enable us at once to distinguish the false teachers from the true. For this purpose we must, above all, bear in mind in what the spiritual life really consists—that it is not merely a joyous stroll through this world, but a disciplined advance towards eternity. It is therefore not a matter of ease and pleasure, but of arduous labour.

Furthermore, it is necessary to ascertain what claim to authority he possesses who sets himself up as a teacher of truth to others. In order to fill such a ministry worthily, one must first practise in one's own life that which one desires to teach to others by word of mouth, so that good example may prove to be the most efficacious sermon. In any case, fine theories arc not enough, and whether it be for one's own sanctification or for that of others, not merely good works, but superlatively good works are requisite.

There is a close connection between the Offertory (Dan. iii, 40) and the Secret. Azarias standing with his companions in the burning fiery furnace of Babylon, and remembering that it was then no longer possible to offer to Jehovah the legal sacrifices of sheep and oxen because the Temple was destroyed, offers to him the spiritual sacrifice of their faith

[1] Matt, iv, 6.

and their martyrdom. Thus, too, in place of the holocausts of the Old Law the Christian people join the oblation of their own hearts to that of the eucharistie sacrifice, so that, instead of their reserving- to the service of Jehovah only a small portion of their possessions, as the Jews did, God alone shall dominate the spirit of man, *et sit Deus omnia in omnibus.*

The Secret resumes the theme already wonderfully expounded in the Epistle to the Hebrews, on the oneness of the sacrifice of the New Law, in proof of the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over that of Aaron. The latter required a number of sacrificial rites which, by their constant repetition, testified to their insufficiency, whereas Christ, by the one sacrifice, has fulfilled the office of his pontificate, and throughout all the centuries past and future has conferred grace and holiness on his faithful followers.

The strength of St Paul's argument concerning the oneness of the sacrifice of Christ—of which the sacrifice of innocent Abel is a pleasing type—is in no wise impaired by the constant renewal of the eucharistie oblation; for by this we commemorate and perpetuate the sacrifice of Calvary, which transcends time and place and is truly universal—that is, eminently Catholic. Christ, moreover, when on the cross, was not alone, for he made us all partakers in his act of expiation, joining to his own sacrifice that of the whole body of believers.

For this reason all that we do and suffer for him shares in the sanctity of that oblation, so that the Apostle was able to look upon the labours of his own ministry as the completion of the sufferings of Jesus for the good of the Church. Here is the text of this beautiful prayer:

Secreta

Deus, qui legalium differentiam hostiarum unius sacrificii perfectione sanxisti: accipe sacrificium a devotis tibi famulis, et pari benedictione, sicut munera Abel, sanctifica, ut, quod singuli obtulerunt ad majestatis tuae honorem, cunctis proficiat ad salutem. Per Dominum.

Secret

O God, who hast ratified the diverse victims of the law by one perfect sacrifice; receive this sacrifice from thy servants devoted to thee, and hallow it by a blessing like to that which thou gavest to the gifts of Abel; so that what each has offered in honour of thy majesty may avail to the salvation of all. Through our Lord.

The recollection of this relationship between our spiritual life and the sacrifice of Calvary is very suitable for nourishing solid Christian piety, especially at the moment of the eucharistie sacrifice, in which the whole body of the faithful presents to God by the hand of the priest the oblation of the Lamb immolated for the sins of the world, thus celebrating "the mysteries of the death of Jesus."

The Communion is from Psalm xxx: "Bow down thine ear, make haste to deliver me." The "bowing down of his ear" on the part of the Almighty signifies the condescension and the gratuitous character of divine grace. The reason why the Psalmist so often describes his own sufferings is that it is our very wretchedness which moves the heart of God to take pity on us, in such wise that the greater our miseries, so much the more do they influence his compassion.

In to-day's Post-Communion the divine Eucharist is likened to a medicine, for it is the true antidote against the virus of Eden's fateful apple. In this sacrament, indeed, under the veil of faith, Christ nourishes us with the bitter fruit of Calvary—*in amaro salus*—and by his triumphant death bestows upon us immunity from the death of the soul.

Postcommunio

Tua nos, Domine, medicinalis operatio, et a nostris perversitatibus clementer expediat, et ad ea quae sunt recta perducat. Per Dominum.

Post-Communion

May thy healing Sacrament, O Lord, both deliver us from our perverse inclinations and guide us to what is right. Through our Lord.

The unleavened bread also with which the Latin Church offers the holy sacrifice to God is a beautiful symbol of the mystery of pain which surrounds the sacrament of the death of Christ, for unleavened bread was the bread of sorrow to our fathers when the Egyptians drove them hurriedly out of Egypt. They had no time then to leaven their bread, so they ate it unleavened and watered with their tears; but having once entered into the promised land, they sat down joyfully to eat wheaten bread. God deals in the same manner with his Christian people. This world is our Egypt, and we cat with tears the unleavened bread of exile, looking forward in hope to that blessed day in which, having arrived at the shore of eternity and set our feet upon the promised land, Christ will nourish us with the children's bread in the glory of his beatitude.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

In the eighth century the Introit for this Sunday was chosen also as that of the Feast of the *Hypapante* or Purification, on which day the Eastern Church commemorates the meeting of Simeon with the infant Jesus in the *atrium* of the Temple, which seems to have been the primitive signification of the feast also at Rome. The verse for to-day's Com-

munion is similarly in use also among the Orientals, who habitually sing it during the distribution of the holy mysteries. It should be noted that this custom appears to be older than the institution among the Latins of psalmody during the Communion.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xlvii : "We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple; according to thy name, O God, so also is thy praise unto the ends of the earth : thy right hand is full of justice." No place on earth can contain the glory of God and his mercy. Nevertheless, having regard to human nature and the social character which unites all the children of Adam, God has disposed, in the present economy of creation, that the faithful shall obtain the fruits of redemption, not singly and directly, but in a supernatural and divine society, which is the Church.

In this great society, which we may compare to an organism, or, more accurately, to the human body, as St Paul does, the channels of the exuberant life of the divine Essence, the arteries of grace, are determined by clearly distinguished marks—that is, by the sacraments and sacramentals, through which all the treasures of Christ's redemption are conveyed to us. It is here, therefore, in the Church's Liturgy, that we must preferably seek the means of sanctification, the essential food of our Catholic piety; to which are to be co-ordinated with very great advantage all other acts of private, intimate, and personal devotion, by which the soul prepares and disposes itself, as it were, for the great liturgy of the sacraments.

The Collect warns us against the danger of rendering our prayers fruitless by not praying with a right intention. The wicked sometimes ask of God the satislaction of their evil desires, and of one of these it is said in Psalm cviii, 7 : *Et oratio ejus fiat in peccatum.* Others, through want of preparation and of earnestness in their prayers, do not know what to say to God, and behave so irreverently that the Book of Wisdom likens them to persons who arc uttering almost a challenge to God. Others, again, cannot rise in their prayers above their own petty egotistical interests, of cupidity, ambition, and jealousy, and to these God says, as he did to the two sons of Zebedee : *Nescitis quid petatis.*

In order that God may hear our prayer, it should contain a petition of real advantage to us, and nothing is of such benefit to us as God's grace, which prepares us for future glory. Let us, then, be ever instant in prayer, but at the same time our requests should be influenced by the spirit of that prayer which Jesus himself has given us : *Sic ergo vos orabitis.* Let us ask of our heavenly Father the increase of

his glory and the accomplishment of his will, and all the rest will be given to us in addition.

The portion of the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans (viii, 12-17), which is read on this Sunday, describes the main features of Christian regeneration—the Holy Ghost, the filial trust in prayer, the dignity of being sons of God, which gives us the right to be admitted to participation in the heritage of God and of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ. All this, however, is given to us on condition that we do not live according to the inclinations of our corrupt nature, but that in the Spirit of Christ crucified we sacrifice our uncontrolled natural feelings, so that we may live no longer for our own selves, but for him who died for us on the cross and after three days rose again.

The Gradual, from Psalm xxx, is similar to that for the Monday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent : " Be thou unto me, O God, a protector and a place of refuge to save me." God, as Clement of Alexandria has aptly said, shows himself to us according to the exigencies of our own dispositions. He who maintains a loving trust in God will have in him a tender protector and a sure refuge in all dangers and temptations, while, as St Paul teaches, *venit ira Dei super filios diffidentiae.* The Gradual thus continues : " In thee, O God, have I hoped; O Lord, let me never be confounded." Which of us can affirm this with so much confidence, and without needing to reproach himself with having sometimes trusted in his own strength, in his friends, or in the great ones of the earth? Jeremias alone could say : *Diem hominis non desideravi, tu scis.* " O Lord, let me never be confounded "—*Non confundar in aeternum.*

We may truly say *in aeternum,* for the accomplishment of God's great plan of salvation is not fulfilled in time, but in eternity; we must not therefore expect in this life that which God has reserved for us only in the next. He has not promised us either life or health, riches or honours in this world, nor did he give them even to Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son. No one, therefore, may expect from God that which the Gospel does not promise him. The promise is for the future, for heaven, and it is in heaven that we must place our hope.

The alleluiatic verse is to-day in agreement with the Introit psalm, as is elsewhere the rule. W'e have already remarked that the series of these verses for the Sundays throughout the year is somewhat uncertain in the Gregorian tradition. *Alleluia, quale volueris,* say the ancient codices. " Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised, in the city of our God, in his holy mountain." All the earth is the Lord's, but in order to give us a tangible proof of his power he was

pleased in times gone by to work wonders in his holy temple, in an especial manner among the Jewish people at Jerusalem alone, and on the hill of Sion, but now in these days in every place where the Catholic Church dedicates to his honour an altar and a tabernacle.

In the Gospel, from St Luke xvi (1-9), our Saviour teaches us by the parable of the unjust steward the necessity of giving alms to the poor and the efficacy of the prayers of the saints on behalf of those at the point of death. This latter thought was very delicately expressed by the early Christians when, on the *arcosolia* of the Roman catacombs, they sometimes represented the saints as interceding for the deceased person before the divine tribunal, and sometimes as conducting their clients into the habitation of the blessed. It is therefore not altogether correct to say that material treasures are of no value in the heavenly kingdom. They can, indeed, profit the soul, but only on condition that they be in accordance with those of that blessed country. How is this assured? By doing as the saints have done—as, for example, St Lawrence did when material treasures *in caelestes thesauros manus pauperum deportaverunt.*

That we should so use our material treasures as to make unto ourselves friends for eternity is the conclusion to be drawn from to-day's Gospel. Temporal works of mercy are recommended as well as spiritual, but more especially are counselled suffrages in aid of the holy souls in Purgatory, so that by hastening their enjoyment of the beatific vision they may be enabled, in their turn, to plead our cause before the divine tribunal and receive us at our death into their heavenly mansions.

The Offertory, from Psalm xvii, is identical with that of the Friday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent: "Thou wilt save the humble people, O Lord, and wilt bring down the eyes of the proud : for who is God but thou, O Lord?" The reason why God gives his help to the lowly and casts down the proud is that the latter rob him of his glory and attribute it to themselves. Nothing is so much opposed to the original end for which God created the universe as the pride, the true wantonness of the spirit, which defrauds the Creator of the praise due to him alone.

The Secret brings to God's remembrance that the gifts which we arc about to offer him are themselves the fruit of his grace—*De tuis donis ac datis,* as all the ancient anaphora, including the Oriental, express it—because it is by him that they have been lavished upon us. We implore God, therefore, that the efficacy of the sacred mysteries may so avail to sanctify our earthly life that, when it is ended, the blessed life of glory in heaven may be ours. This is the

special fruit promised to us in the Holy Eucharist. Through this sacrament we live again the holy life of Christ our Redeemer, in his humiliations, his patience, and his self-sacrifice, so that we may also partake of it in due time in the glory of his Resurrection.

The antiphon sung during the Communion reproduces exactly the text of the original Communion psalmody, first used by the Eastern Church and copied, in their turn, by the Latins. There exists, however, this difference between the two rites : in the Roman rite the antiphon for the Communion is taken indifferently from any part of the Psalter, whereas the Eastern Church, at least from the time of St Cyril of Jerusalem, has kept this verse of Psalm xxxiii exclusively for the distribution of the Communion. " Taste and see that the Lord is sweet : blessed is the man that hopeth in him."

The prophet invites us, before all, to taste the delights of the spirit, because this, as St Gregory the Great justly observes, is the difference between material and spiritual pleasures; material delights are desired in anticipation, but when once tasted they produce satiety ; those of the spirit, on the contrary, are not desired by such as have never experienced and enjoyed them. These, however, when once they have been tasted, produce an immense desire for them, a desire which makes the soul of the pilgrim to languish with love—this is the hunger and thirst after justice of which the Gospel speaks—and which can only be satisfied in heaven by the clear vision of God : *Satiabor cum apparuerit, gloria tua.*

In the Post-Communion we ask that the sacred mysteries of the Eucharist may be to us a remedy, not only for the soul, but also for the body. Nor can it be otherwise. The humanity of the Word is like a welling fountain which sends forth its waters in abundance. All who approach it are refreshed in the same manner as those were healed, who, as the Gospel tells us, eagerly strove to touch at least the Saviour's vesture, *quia virtus de illo exibat et sanabat omnes.*

The Blessed Sacrament establishes besides an intimate connection with our mortal body, to which the assimilation of the divine flesh and the virginal blood gives a sure token of future resurrection. This seed of immortality which the sacred body of Jesus comes to sow in our mortal frame not only has the virtue of calming within us our passions and of curbing our evil inclinations, but, according to the faith of the believer and the divine disposition, it is sometimes also a most efficacious remedy against bodily infirmities.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

As we shall presently see, the series of Sundays after Pentecost was originally interrupted about the time of the feast of St Lawrence, in order to institute a sort of liturgical cycle of several weeks of preparation and closure around this festival, which was celebrated at Rome with the greatest splendour from the fourth century onwards. The radiant figure of the Martyr stood out majestically against this background, and the monotony of the summer series of the Sunday Masses being broken, the Roman Liturgy was thus rendered more varied, and therefore more popular. The decline of the spirit of faith in Christian society was the first and foremost reason why, when the importance and the number of feasts were reduced, the Liturgy could no longer make so strong an appeal to the hearts of the faithful, as in the golden centuries of religious fervour.

The sequence of these Sundays after St Lawrence was not everywhere the same, for, whilst the Roman documents of the Frankish period usually reckon five Sundays after the *natalis* of the *Staurophoros,* the Calendar of Fronteau has only four. There seems to be more uncertainty, not only in the number of these Sundays, but also in the matter of moveable feasts, which, in the annual cycle, did not depend merely on the date of the respective solemnities of the martyrs, but on that of Pentecost as well.

As we have already had occasion to remark, the series of the Introit psalms after Pentecost now shows such wide gaps that it is permissible to ask oneself whether they really constituted a group by themselves, lip to the Wednesday of the autumn Ember Days, the Psalter follows this order : Psalms xii, xvii, xxiv, xxvi, xxvi, xxvii, xlvi, xlvii, liii, liv, lxvii, lxix, lxxiii, lxxxiii, lxxxv, lxxxv, cxviii. After the Ember Days this progressive sequence is interrupted ; there now follow some antiphons from the psalms, which give place to others taken from Ecclesiasticus, Jeremias, Daniel, and Esther; in short, a cycle in itself, with its own distinctive marks.

It is difficult to determine the cause of the great gaps which appear in the first series, for, even supposing that the Masses of the Wednesday and Friday of each week, in use in Christian antiquity, and of which many traces have remained in medieval lectionaries, had each its own Introit, the gap would still not be filled. It is necessary, therefore, to conclude that, at the time of the Gregorian reform, the ancient Roman collection of Mass chants was entirely rearranged,

so that it is now a matter of too great difficulty to trace its primitive order.

It is also quite possible that the various Introits of the Lenten Masses, taken here and there from the Psalter, were the primary cause of these great *lacunae* in the psalmodie cycle, whose progressive order we are now considering. On this latter hypothesis there would be no necessity to repeat those chants which had already been sung in Lent, and which consequently would be passed over. However this may be, the *Antiphonarius cento* of St Gregory must have brought about a great rearrangement in the early Roman collection of chants, and it is as much as we can hope for if we succeed in discovering amid the uniform order which the Gradual now shows us, some traces of what were originally quite separate series of chants and cycles of psalmody.

The Introit is from Psalm liii : " Behold, God is my helper, and the Lord is the protector of my soul. Turn back the evils upon mine enemies, and cut them off in thy truth, O Lord my protector."

The Prophet does not here invoke evil upon his enemies, but as he is symbolically representing Christ, of whom he is one of the most striking prophetic types, he foretells the final verdict which Jesus as judge will pronounce upon his implacable enemies. It is as well, moreover, to remember that God chastises the sinners who are still in this world, as well as those who have passed from it in his disfavour. The punishment of God inflicted on these latter is merely in retribution for their sins, whereas that which he inflicts on the living is principally corrective : *Flagellat omnem filium quem recipit.* Therefore the vengeance which God repays from time to time on sinners in this world is really a manifestation of his mercy towards them, whether because it is intended to break down their obstinacy by moving them to repentance, or because God, by bringing their evil designs to naught, deprives them of the occasion of committing further transgressions, and thus rendering their condemnation still more terrible.

In the Collect, which is said also at the end of the Mass on Wednesday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, before the dismissal of the people, we beseech God to let the ears of his mercy be open to the prayers of his suppliants ; but, in order that our prayers may deserve to be heard, and that it may not be said to us as it was to the sons of Zebedee when they begged for compliance with their pious ambition, *Nescitis quid petatis,* we should first ask for divine light to teach us to know that which is truly pleasing to God, and profitable to ourselves.

In the Lesson from the First Epistle to the Corinthians (x, 6-13) St Paul warns us not to imitate the Jews in the various sins committed by them after they came out of Egypt : sensual desires, idolatry, fornication, apostasy, and discontent. Their history should be a lesson to us. To be tempted is common to all men ; God not only upholds us by his grace, but makes the temptation itself turn to our spiritual advantage. How little do we realize this truth, and how many souls lose their serenity of mind under temptation ! They curse their wretchedness, forgetting that the Holy Ghost through the mouth of St James calls those blessed who are exposed to trial. God is never nearer to us than in times of temptation.

The Responsory comes from Psalm viii, in which is unfolded the same theme as that of the well-known Canticle of St Francis to *frater sol.* By the beauty of creation the Psalmist is inspired to magnify the beauty of the Creator. O Lord, thou who, whilst thou reignest as sovereign in heaven and on earth and in the abyss, art in a special manner Lord over those souls who give themselves up to thee, those who say to thee in the words of the Prophet Isaias : *posside nos;* how wonderful is the glory of thy name which is reflected on the entire creation, and like the signature of the artist on his masterpiece, is there to testify that it is the work of thy hands, the object of thy love. Not on earth alone, but even in heaven thy magnificence shows forth there where the angels that form thy spiritual court surround thee, singing loud Hosannas to thy glory.

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from Psalm Iviii, and brought nearer to the preceding Responsory, as it now is, by the suppression of the second scriptural lesson, it produces a certain sense of contrast ; two consecutive chants, the one all joy and exultation, the other sad and sorrowful : " Deliver me from my enemies, O my God : and defend me from them that rise up against me." This prayer of Christ to his Father in the face of his enemies is also the prayer of the faithful soul continually assaulted by Satan.

The Gospel extract from St Luke (xix, 41-47) describes how our Lord wept over Jerusalem, as he approached it for the last time, and prophesied the siege of the city and its destruction by Vespasian and Titus. How great is the love of Jesus for souls ! Even when they have forfeited every mercy, he weeps over their lot, and will not pronounce a sentence of condemnation upon them, until he has first tried all means of winning their rebellious hearts. According to the indications given in his Homiliary, St Gregory the Great must have commentated on this passage in the Lateran Basilica, but as the lists of the Lessons of the Sunday Mass

suffered some alterations under him, it cannot necessarily be deduced from the notes in the Homiliary that in his time the station of this Sunday was usually celebrated at the Lateran.

The verse *ad offerenduni,* taken from Psalm xviii, is the same as that of the Third Sunday in Lent. " The justices of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts, and his judgements sweeter than honey and the honeycomb : for thy servant keepeth them." Obedience points out to the faithful soul a joyful path free from doubt and danger. It fills him with energy and happiness, for when God commands anything he gives us likewise the grace necessary to carry out that which he wishes to be done. Obedience is considered as being sweeter than the honeycomb, both because God loveth obedience more than sacrifice, and also because the will of God is a more pleasant and more strengthening food than all other heavenly consolations. Christ himself proclaimed it to be such when he said to his apostles : *meus cibus est ut jaciam voluntatem ejus qui misit me.*

The Secret is very finely expressed : Grant, O Lord, that we may approach the altar of thy Mysteries not only with frequency, but also with the right dispositions and not merely from habit. For, as often as this sacrifice is renewed, although Christ, at once victim and priest, can die no more, yet he offers to the Father, and pours forth upon us, all the merits of his expiatory suffering and death.

The Communion is derived, contrary to rule, from St John's Gospel (vi, 57), and is similar to that of the Thursday after the Second Sunday in Lent : " He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him, saith the Lord." This union of the soul with Jesus through grace produces the effect so beautifully described by St John in his First Epistle (ii, 6) : *Qui dicit se in ipso manere, debet, sicut ille ambulavit, et ipse ambulare.*

In the Post-Communion we pray for two special gifts. The first concerns the expiatory value of the divine sacrifice, and is the purification of the guilty conscience ; the second has as its object the increase of charity, which, uniting us ever closer to Christ, strengthens also our mystical union with the whole body of the Church.

St Gregory the Great, after having explained to the people the passage which forms to-day's Gospel, compared the distress of the beleaguered city of Jerusalem to that of the soul, which, surrounded by evil spirits, struggles with death and is already at the threshold of eternity. Though Jesus, at the last supper, could say : " The prince of this world cometh, but hath nothing in me" (John xiv, 30), vet all the saints have trembled at the thought of that supreme hour.

The surest way of preparing ourselves for death is the constant practice of good works, so that our adversary may not be able to boast of any hold over us.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

The usual cycle of Sunday Masses for the summer season continues without any special characteristics. Unlike the series of the Sundays in close proximity to the feast of St Peter, those near that of St Lawrence do not contain the slightest allusion to the saint; hence it is the usual festival sacrifice of the Roman Church, which proceeds with its customary rites. The great heat of the capital mentioned even in the Roman Breviary under August 5 is in the meantime driving both patricians and simple citizens to seek relief from the oppressive atmosphere of the city in the villas of the Sabina or of Tusculum.

The fntroit is like that of the Thursday after Ash Wednesday, and comes from Psalm liv. It is a battle hymn, yet a feeling of trust and filial confidence in God pervades it: "When I cried to the Lord, he heard my voice, from them that draw near to me; and he who is before all ages, and remains for ever, humbled them; cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." We must not usurp a position which is not ours. It is for God to direct and provide, and for us to execute the commands of his Providence; to be, as it were, the instruments with which he works. If wc reverse this order and try to take the place of God, he may possibly allow us to do so, but we shall certainly fall victims to our own impotence.

The Collect is of truly classic beauty. God makes manifest his omnipotence chiefly by sparing the guilty and showing mercy to sinners. This is a profound thought, but is accurately expressed, for the rehabilitation of one who has gone astray in his sins requires, so to speak, a condescension and powerful energy on the part of God, such as the creation of the world itself never once called for. The abyss which separates God from evil is, in truth, far more profound than that which separates him from nothing. God, then, bridges over this abyss when in his infinite mercy he descends into it to draw forth the sinner who has sunk therein.

After this consideration of the matter in general terms which serves as an introduction to the Collect, we implore God to pour out with a generous hand upon us his mercy so beneficial to us and so glorious to himself. The result will

be an increase of the supernatural virtue of hope, by means of which the faithful will feel themselves still further encouraged to turn their steps, or rather to hasten them, towards the imperishable treasures which God has promised to those who love him and serve him.

In the passage from St Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (xii, 2-11) he explains the multiform life of the Holy Ghost in the mystical body of Christ, which is the Church. As in the human body each member has its own office, which at the same time conduces to the general welfare and harmony of the whole organism, so in the Christian family there must be distinctions of grace, of social rank, of offices, and of activities. All these, however, must contribute to the common good, through the spirit of charity, which, like a single vital principle, must pervade all the organs and enable them to participate in one universal life.

The Gradual, which is a repetition of that of the Thursday after the First Sunday in Lent, is from Psalm xvi : " Keep me, O Lord, as the apple of thy eye ; protect me under the shadow of thy wings. Let my judgement come forth from thy countenance : let thy eyes behold the things that are equitable." The general theme running through these responsorial psalms is almost always the same, it is Christ who appeals against his enemies to the justice of his Father, or who invokes against death the sure escape of the resurrection. We are to God as the apple of his eye, because there is nothing on earth more precious to him than the human soul, in which is reflected, as in the pupil of an eye, the beauty of the Blessed Trinity in the same way as the eye reflects the light. The shadow of God's wings signifies the benignity of his grace by which he holds back the soul from sin.

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from Psalm Ixiv, and is as follows: ""A hymn, O God, bccometh thee in Sion, and a vow shall be paid thee in Jerusalem."

The Gospel from St Luke (xviii, 9-24) contains the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. The contrast between the puritanical arrogance of the one and the humble self-abasement of the other is strongly marked. The Pharisee completely ignores God in the work of his salvation, the merit of which he takes entirely to himself, consequently God withdraws himself from this self-sufficient soul. The Publican, on the other hand, feels in his humility that from God alone can come forgiveness, so he begins the work of his sanctification by asking pardon for his sins ; and God hastens at once to the help of the soul that calls upon him for assistance.

The Offertory verse, which is common to the First Sunday in Advent, and also to the Thursday after Ash Wednesday, is derived from Psalm xxiv, and expresses the entire confidence

that the soul places in God when opposed by the boldness of its adversaries. " To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul : in thee, O my God, I put my trust, let me not be ashamed : neither let my enemies laugh at me." The soul points to this danger, not in fear, but rather in contempt, adding immediately : " None of them that wait on thee shall be confounded."

The Secret is strikingly worded : " Let the appointed sacrifices be offered to thee, O Lord "—the formula is in the plural because it refers to all the offerings which have been brought by the people desirous of participating in the sacred mysteries—" who dost grant us so to present them before thee that they may also be a saving remedy for ourselves." This is beautifully expressed; for the Holy Eucharist has two chief aims. It renders to God the perfect worship in spirit and in truth, just as God desires it to be paid to him, and it also nourishes charity which is the life of the soul. This grace, which may truly be compared to a first spiritual resurrection like that of Christ, immolated indeed, but gloriously arisen from the dead, initiates the faithful also into the participation of the final triumphant resurrection of the body, on that day when Christ shall win the last complete victory over sin and death.

The Antiphon for the Communion is identical with that appointed for Thursday after Ash Wednesday, and is taken from Psalm l. The Jewish people are now in much the same condition as they were during the Babylonian captivity, having neither temple nor altar. In those days they sustained their faith in the Messias by the hope of a future redemption, at which time, the temple having been rebuilt, Jehovah should again accept their gifts upon his altar. This hope has now been fulfilled, for the Israel according to the spirit—that is, the multitude of the faithful typified under the prophetic figure of ancient Israel—presents to God in every part of the world a pure and acceptable oblation offered upon a spiritual and holy altar that can never be destroyed : Jesus Christ himself.

The Post-Communion is in no way remarkable. In it we ask of God that, through the same divine sacraments with which he continually repairs our spiritual losses—for as material food compensates the exhausted forces of the body, so docs spiritual nourishment restore the soul—he may in his gracious mercy never deprive us of his help, without which we arc incapable of winning eternal life. In short we adduce the Holy Eucharist, the " good grace," as a means of obtaining further graces, the effects of which we need that God should preserve within us by his continuous and enduring acts of help.

Pride, of which the Pharisee is a symbol, is a kind of

spiritual leprosy, even more dangerous in its consequences than are the temptations of the flesh. These latter stain the body, whereas pride stains the soul ; these can be subdued by penances and by the passing of years, but the former does not die even on the bed of death, nor is it consumed even by the flames of hell.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Prima post Sancti Laurentii.

The Mass to-day has a distinctly festive character, and is classified in some documents as that of the first week after the feast of St Lawrence the Martyr. This classification, however, cannot always correspond to the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, since the feast from which the series begins is a moveable festival.

The Introit is a song of triumph in which the household of Christ celebrates in the Holy Ghost the unity, the perfection, and the steadfastness of the Church. The Offertory is a hymn of thanksgiving to the author of so many benefits, and the verse from the psalms for the Communion, whilst it suggests in what way we should worship God by a right use of his material gifts, contains also a striking allusion to the fruitfulness of the summer season, to the harvest ready to be gathered into the granaries, and to the fast-approaching vintage, for which the grape-clusters are already ripening to gold on the vines which cover far and wide the smiling hill-sides of the Roman Campagna. In a word, a suggestive picture of a fine harvest on a brilliant summer morning.

The Antiphon to be sung at the entrance of the clergy into the Church is drawn from Psalm Ixvii, which in its turn is inspired by the Canticle of the prophetess Debbora : " God in his holy place ; God who maketh men of one mind to dwell in a house: he shall give power and strength to his people." The everlasting " holy place " of God is in heaven. It is thither that he leads his wandering flock through the desert of this world. The way is barred by our spiritual foes, pre-figured by all those nations who attempted to prevent the Israelites from going forward and entering the land of promise. But the Lord God is the protector of his people ; he rises up to defend them, and by the breath of his spirit scatters all their enemies.

The Collect which follows is a perfect liturgical gem : ** Almighty, everlasting God, who out of thy bountiful loving-kindness art wont to give beyond the deserts and the prayers

of those who humbly pray to thee ; pour forth thy mercy upon us, so that thou mayest put away those things of which our conscience is afraid, and grant us blessings which our prayer does not venture to ask."

This short petition from the Sunday Liturgy contains a complete treatise on prayer, which, if it is to develop in due order, must be humb e, and must begin with the practices of the purificative way, constantly asking of God the pardon of one's past sins. It is not fitting, in short, that a soul guilty of numberless disloyalties should ask of God those special favours which the spouse or the friend alone may hope to receive. This is why that holy monk who converted the harlot Thais, having shut her in a cave, taught her to pray in these words only: " *Qui plasmasti me, miserere mei."* He deemed her unworthy even to utter the adorable name of God. Thais obeyed, and became a saint.

Having faithfully carried out the cleansing practices of the purificative way, the soul is invited by God himself to rise higher—*ascende superius*—to the illuminative and, finally, even to the unitive way, to which is reserved the perfect union with almighty God—that is, the gift of love, which is precisely that to which the Collect alludes in all humility : *et adjicias quod oratio non praesumit,* " that which our prayer does not venture to ask." Truly the prayer of the poor sinner cannot claim so great a favour, but it is permitted to us to hope for this from the infinite mercy of God through the merits of Jesus Christ ; for, though the grace of perfect love is not due to us, yet it is certainly due to him, and is given for his sake.

The Epistle (i Cor. xv, 1-10), which follows on that of last Sunday, contains a sketch in strong concise strokes of the primitive Christian *catechesis,* both in its dogmatic aspect and in that which concerns the life of Christ. It is based entirely on the doctrine of our Lord's resurrection, which is attested in a hundred ways by the Scriptures and by the apostles themselves. The faithful are saved by means of this faith, which must not, however, be sterile and dead, but must be fruitful in good works in imitation of St Paul, in whom the griice of God did not remain inactive and lifeless, but, seconded by the co-operation of the Apostle, brought forth so much fruit that he who once persecuted the Church of Damascus was able, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to bear witness to the fact that he had laboured more for the diffusion of the Gospel than all the other apostles. *"Abundantius illis omnibus laboravi."* Great and glorious is his pride—not in his celestial visions and spiritual favours, but in the labours and toils which he had undergone for the sake of the Gospel.

The Gradual is the same as that for the Friday after the Third Sunday in Lent, and conies from Psalm xxvii : " In God hath my heart confided, and I have been helped; and my flesh hath flourished again ; and with my will I will give praise to him. Unto thee will I cry, O Lord : O my God, be not thou silent; depart not from me." God is silent when by continued neglect or abuse of his grace we have rendered ourselves unworthy thereof. He then no longer speaks to us in secret, because our hearts of their own accord have become hardened and callous to such a degree that we are no longer able to hear the voice of God. Such a state comes very close to that of final impenitence, and should fill lukewarm souls with dread, for tepidity ofttimes becomes more intensified and degenerates into this form of spiritual lethargy.

The alleluiatic verse is from Psalm Ixxx, and calls upon us to rejoice in Jehovah, the God of Jacob, the help and support of all the spiritual descendants of Israel. Let us therefore sing hymns and praise him with the harp, giving him the thanks which are his due. When God, who is the universal sovereign of all creation, takes in the Scriptures the title of God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, he does so in order to show that those holy Patriarchs who are dead lived in him, and that he belonged to them in a special manner as their reward and as the object of their faith, hope, and charity, when they were pilgrims here on earth.

The Gospel from St Mark (vii, 31-37), with the story of the healing of the deaf and dumb man from the Decapolis, must have brought back to the memory of the early Christians one of the most expressive ceremonies of their initiation to the faith as catechumens when the priest with holy oil or with saliva touched their lips, which until then had been dumb to the divine praises, saying, as Jesus said : *Ephpheta,* " Be thou opened." St Gregory the Great commentated very thoroughly on this miracle when expounding the Prophet Ezechiel to the people.l

The Gospel ends with this canticle of praise, addressed by the deeply touched crowd to Jesus: ""He hath done all things well ; he hath made both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." With how much greater cause could we repeat these words after twenty centuries of grace, we who understand far better than all that populace the comprehensiveness of that *bene omnia fecit !* He has disposed everything, according to the ineffable ways of his mercy, nations, families, and individuals. Indeed, the whole history of the Church and that of the world as well confirm this truth : *Bene omnia fecit.* This is the true optimism, alone worthy of the all-good and all-powerful God.

Homtliar. in Eaech., Lib. I, hom. X.

The Offertory is also that of Ash Wednesday, and is taken from Psalm xxix : " I will extol thee, O Lord, for thou hast upheld me, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me : O Lord, I have cried to thee, and thou hast healed me." The Holy Ghost places this song of thanksgiving on the lips of Christ now crucified and risen in triumph from the dead. When breathing his last he put himself into the hands of his Father, and the Father—in spite of the enemies of Jesus who placed his dead body in the tomb, setting guards before it lest anyone should carry the body away—laid in his bosom that pierced heart which beat no longer, but was cold in death. That heart belonged to him, for it was the heart of his own Son, a heart entirely consecrated to himself. At the contact with the Father's heart, the heart of Jesus received again, as it were, vital warmth and living motion. The Father avenges the glory of his Son. Evil men adjudged him to be unworthy of life, and put him to a shameful death, but the heavenly Father restores him to a new and imperishable life, a glorious life, which is the cause of the resurrection of all those also who believe in him.

In the Secret we call upon God to look compassionately upon the sacrifice which is about to be offered to him, so that it may be a remedy for the weakness of our nature. The *servitus,* of which the Missal speaks, is precisely that which the Greeks term *λειτουργία*—that is, the sacerdotal ministry. As food gives strength to the body, so the Eucharist confers on the soul a divine fortitude, that fortitude which sustained the fearless martyrs of old when face to face with the stake and the sword of the executioner. Of them was it said with truth : *Eucharistia martyres alit.*

The Communion is derived from the Book of Proverbs (Hi, 9-10). It departs from the usual rule of the classical antiphons, but it is too well suited to the character of these summer Masses, during the time of harvest, for the Gregorian compiler to have omitted it. " Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first of all thy fruits : and thy barns shall be filled with abundance, and thv presses shall run over with wine."

The general meaning of this antiphon is to teach us the suitability of offering to God and to the Church the first-fruits of the earth, as though to consecrate through them the whole of the harvest. Indeed, this blessing of the firstfruits in early times took place, as a rule, soon after the *anamnesis,* and to it refer these words of the Roman Canon : *Per quern haec omnia*—that is, the fruits—*semper bona creas, sanctificas, vivificas,* etc.

In the Post-Communion, we beseech God to grant us, through the efficacy of this Sacrament, health of soul and of

body. The Eucharist nourishes the soul, but the body also feels the beneficent effect of this contact with the body of Jesus, a contact which, at the last, confers upon it the grace of the final resurrection.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Secunda post Sancti Laurentii.

The Mass for this Sunday has much the same characteristics as that of the previous week. The Introit contains the solemn invocation *Deus in adjutorium,* which was so often on the lips of the Fathers of the desert, and which the Church still places at the beginning of all the hours of the divine Office. The Gregorian Offertory with the dramatic prayer of Moses is, in its words and in its music, a little liturgical gem. The passage from the Psalms at the Communion is a graceful allusion both to the Eucharistic elements and also to the harvest of the fields and of the vineyards, which rejoices the heart of the husbandman at this season.

The Introit is from Psalm Ixix : " O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me." The sacred Liturgy has made this verse its favourite prayer, because it expresses so perfectly the conditions of our spiritual life while on earth. This is not a time of peace nor of truce. Our foes attack us unceasingly, and what is more terrifying, they make use, in this hand-to-hand struggle, of crafty methods, perfidious frauds, spiritual illusions, and treacherous deceits. At times, when the assault is most imminent, we, like Jonas, are fast asleep, not realizing in any way the danger which threatens us. It is necessary then that someone should rouse us from this state of lethargy, and say to us, as was said to the Prophet of Nineveh : " Sleepest thou?" *Surge, invoca Deum tuum.*

In the Collect we acknowledge, first of all, that it is by the grace of God, and not by our own merit, if we give him fitting service. With regard to the attainment of eternal life our strength is indeed wholly insufficient, so much so that divine grace is absolutely necessary to us, in order that our good works may merit a reward which far surpasses the desires of our poor human nature. Not only our works, but also our good thoughts, which, in their turn, are the outcome of the working of our intellect, must come from God, according to the teaching of the Apostle: *Non quia idonei sumus cogitare aliquid a nobis, tamquam a nobismetipsis, sed*

sufficientia nostra ex Deo est.[1] If, therefore, we have received all from God, and if our own co-operation with grace is the effect of this same grace, of what have we to boast?

The Collect goes on to entreat of God the favour that he would remove from our path all those dangers and obstacles which might perhaps delay or impede us on our journey to eternity in such a manner that we may advance, or rather hasten quickly, towards that blessed country which God has promised to us. How solicitous the Church shows herself regarding our progress in the way of perfection! She takes into consideration our nature, and knows how easily we allow our attention to be taken up by the affairs of the world around us. For the most part, there will be trials and crosses, and we shall find it difficult to look beyond them and descry the happy future which God reserves for us. Therefore the holy Liturgy frequently stirs up within us the theological virtues of faith and Christian hope, and is desirous that our interior edifice, that kingdom of God which *intra vos est,* should rest on this solid and supernatural foundation.

In the extract from the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (iii, 4-9)—which is in close connection with the Offertory for to-day containing the sublime prayer of Moses—St Paul, in order to uphold his authority against those who were questioning it, speaks to his disciples at Corinth of the glory which was formerly reflected on the face of the great Lawgiver of Israel, so that he was obliged to cover its brightness with a veil. If God desired to surround with so much majesty the Old Testament, which was destined to be made void, how much greater should not be the glory and the authority of the apostles and ministers of the New Covenant?

The Gradual is taken from Psalm xxxiii, the verses of which are in alphabetical order: "I will bless the Lord at all times"—not only in the hour of triumph, as those do who serve God only with a view to their own advantage—"his praise shall be always in my mouth." This is how Job acted and the martyrs, for they looked upon their very sufferings as being so many graces given to them in abundance by God from his merciful heart. "In the Lord shall my soul be praised: let the meek hear and rejoice." Those who do not glory in God, glory in bodily health, in riches, intellect, or success; but those, on the other hand, who glory in the Lord, glory, like St Paul, in crosses and sufferings, in bonds and ill-treatment, because all these things magnify the divine power which gives so much fortitude to those who believe.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm lxxxvii, and in the

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 5.

in.

Gregorian Antiphonary we sometimes find it in use for the Offertory, as in the night Mass of the Ember Days at St Peter's. " O Lord, the God of my salvation, I have cried in the day and in the night before thee." We may be said to pray in the day, when prayer is sweetened by spiritual favours; but we pray in the night—and this prayer is far more helpful and more acceptable—when we persevere in praying in the midst of dryness and desolation of spirit. This kind of prayer, if it be not pleasing to us, is, however, very pleasing to God, and is like to that prayer of our Saviour in the Garden of Olives when *factus in agonia, prolixius orabat.*

The Gospel (Luke x, 23-37) now follows with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The sacerdotalism and rabbinism of the Jews perceive the wretched Gentile lying wounded by the wayside, but pass him by. Then Jesus comes, and has compassion on the poor suffering man; he anoints his wounds with the oil of the grace of the Holy Ghost and the wine of the Eucharist, raises him up on his own beast by participation in the merits of his most sacred humanity, and bringing him to an inn, entrusts him to the care of the Church. To the host, that is, to his sacred ministers, he consigns for his maintenance two pence, which are symbolical of the Sacraments and of the Gospel, promising that all which they shall spend over and above shall be repaid to them on his return, at the last day, the day of judgement.

The Offertory from Exod. xxxii (11-14) is in harmony with the Epistle. From a musical point of view it is one of the most beautiful pieces in the Gregorian collection. In it we have the prayer of Moses on that occasion when Jehovah was about to destroy utterly the Israelites after their sin of idolatry in connection with the golden calf. The great leader calls upon the Lord to remember the merits of the ancient Patriarchs and the glorious promises made to them. By these words God was appeased; from which it is clearly seen that the Catholic doctrine concerning the Invocation of Saints is both legitimate and beneficial, and that it is founded on Holy Scripture. The true reason why the merits of the saints are applicable to us is that we all form one and the same body under one head, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Catholic doctrine of the Communion of Saints is, in general, but little reflected upon, even by many devout persons who do not altogether escape the tendency, so common in these days, to shut themselves up in a narrow individualism. They mourn over their miseries and over the very imperfect manner in which they serve God; but how much more courage and comfort w'ould they not find in the thought that their actions are not so isolated as they imagine,

but, on the contrary, are united to the sanctity of the whole Church from which they derive an incalculable efficacy?

The Secret teaches us to pray to God that he would mercifully accept the sacrifice about to be offered to him. This offering is made for two most sublime ends: the first is that of rendering to God that tribute of perfect adoration in spirit and in truth which is due to him; the second is that of obtaining from him pardon for the sins which we have committed. Every other favour which we can suitably ask of the Lord is subordinate to this pardon; because as all the evils both physical and moral which afflict us are the result of our sins—St Paul would call them *stipendia mali*—so, if the cause be removed, its evil consequences will also cease.

The words of the Communion, which are drawn from Psalm ciii, arc equally applicable to the Holy Eucharist as to the summer season in which the crops are harvested. God is wonderful in his works, when year by year he brings out of the earth food to nourish the great family of the human race. Men, indeed, as St Augustine well observes, either marvel at the miracles related in the Gospels, or else they deny them outright, simply because they do not understand how such things can be, and because they themselves have never witnessed them. Yet to nourish all humanity each year with the fruit of that little seed which is laid in the ground demands a far greater power than that which Jesus exercised when he multiplied the five loaves in the desert, and with them fed his five thousand hearers. The miracles of faith, therefore, receive indirect confirmation from the things which God accomplishes under our own eyes, as the Apostle says: The intellect contemplates the invisible things of God through that which he has worked in the visible world.[1]

The Post-Communion in its Latin brevity, which reminds one of an ancient inscription, is an epitome of Eucharistic doctrine. Holy Communion, it explains, makes us sharers in the mystery of Christ's redemption, in the blood of his sacrifice. In consequence of this participation we obtain all the fruits of this redemption—that is, the cleansing from sin and the strengthening of our powers that they may become more skilful in fighting against the wiles of Satan and the perverse desires of our corrupt nature.

The ministers of the Lord may truly say with St Paul: *Ego impendam ... et superimpendar ipse pro animabus.*[2] The divine promise cannot fail them, and when Jesus, the Good Samaritan, returns to pay that which is due to them, he will reward them abundantly for all that they have done for souls: *Quodcumque supererogaveris. ego com rediero reddam tibi.*[3]

1 Rom. i. 20. * 2 Cor. xi». 15. ▮ Luke x, 35.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tertia post Sancti Laurentii.

The Lessons from the Epistles to the Corinthians being ended, to-day we begin those from the Epistle to the Galatians, which will be continued on the coming Sundays. It may be noted that this order in reading the Holy Scriptures in the Mass during the course of the year is more ancient at Rome than the institution of the daily divine Office, and indeed is quite apart from it, thus recalling those very early days when the first part of the Mass—known later as the Mass of the Catechumens—with its magnificent sequence of psalms and lessons, formed the only euchological rite in preparation for the Holy Sacrifice. The various parts of the divine Office represent, therefore, ancient divisions of the primitive Eucharistic synaxis of apostolic times. This is the reason why, even to this day, in metropolitan and capitular basilicas, the solemn conventual Mass constitutes the central point on which the entire daily Office converges, like so many rays towards their centre.

The Introit is taken from Psalm Ixxiii : " Have regard, O Lord, to thy covenant, and forsake not to the end the souls of thy poor : arise, O Lord, and judge thy cause, and forget not the voices of them that seek thee." The cause of the Christian people is the cause of God, for man, our fellow-Christian, is only persecuted because he represents and carries on the mission of him of whom Simeon foretold that he should be fora sign of universal contradiction.[1] In spite, however, of this widespread inheritance of hate, the final victory will always remain with Christ and his faithful followers, for God promised this to the Patriarchs of old, those of whom the Messias took the name of Son. It seems, at times, as though God had forgotten his Church, and that is when our sins have placed a kind of barrier between him and us, which prevents our raising our eyes to him.

In the Collect we ask for an increase of the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which are, as it were, the foundation of Christian perfection. They are called by the Greek term " theological " because they have God both as their beginning and as their end. Faith is the interior light which shows us our final supernatural aim, and illuminates the way by which we are to reach it ; hope nourishes in the soul the desire of attaining this end, whilst God assures it of his powerful aid ; charity, the greatest of

[1] Luke ii, 34.

the three, is the irresistible impulse which carries the soul towards God, longing· ardently to throw itself into his arms and possess him as its own to hold and to keep for all eternity.

The whole fabric of Christian perfection rests on this triple foundation of the theological virtues, so that the teachers of the spiritual life insist strongly upon the benefits which the soul derives from a constant repetition of these acts of faith, hope, and charity, which will finally and habitually direct the whole course of our interior life. In this, too, a steady perseverance is essential, and becomes a powerful means of arriving at heroic perfection.

The second part of the Collect further elucidates the signification of the first. God promises a magnificent reward—that is, himself. This reward, however, is conditional on the fulfilling of his law, which, in the present enfeebled state of our corrupt nature, is both difficult and hard. How is this obstacle to be overcome? Is it fitting, on the other hand, that God's faithful servants should follow him lamenting and toiling as if by compulsion like slaves condemned to the galleys? Certainly not! Therefore the Collect goes on to say: "and that we may be worthy to gain what thou dost promise, make us to love what thou commandest." Here we sec the effect of divine grace. It reinvigorates the heart of the faithful disciple, and filling him with so great a sweetness in the service of his Lord, causes him to serve not as a slave from fear of punishment, but with the love of a son to whom nothing is more pleasing than the accomplishment of his Father's will: *Quae placila sunt ei facio semper.*

St Paul remarks in the Epistle (Gal. iii, 16-22) that the law given to Moses 430 years after the divine promise was made to Abraham and his seed did not disannul that promise, which was anterior, voluntary, and absolute, whereas the Law was of the nature of a temporary contract, two-sided, and capable of being abolished by either of the contracting parties. Israel was the first to break it by denying the Messias, therefore it was just that God should do away with the Law, replacing it by the Gospel. Consequently the Jews no longer have a religious monopoly, but all believers are called to enter into the inheritance of faith promised to Abraham.

The Gradual is derived from the same psalm as the Introit—the seventy-third—and is common also to the Thursday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent. It recalls to God the promises made to the Patriarchs, and draws his attention to their merits, which, in a certain measure, cover our own unworthiness. In other words, we say thus to God: "O Lord, we have not deserved thy grace, but grant it to us, as an

inheritance due to us because of thy promises to our Fathers the Patriarchs of old, who served thee with a pure and perfect worship. We have no personal merits which can avail us, but their merits are also ours, since we are their sons and their heirs. Our cause is their cause, therefore it is thine; the humiliation to which our enemies have now reduced us is their humiliation, therefore it is also thine, for the whole life of Israel—the true Israel, which is the Church—represents and perpetuates mystically the Messianic coming of Christ."

The alleluiatic verse, which—as we should remind ourselves from time to time—used to follow after a second lesson preceding the Gospel, is from Psalm lxxxix: "Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation." The help of man fails either from inconstancy or from incapability. God, on the contrary, is always constant in his friendship, and his love, which is altogether disinterested and voluntary, overflows with every kind of favour for his friends.

The Gospel (Luke xvii, 11-19) relates the healing of the ten lepers, of whom only one, a Samaritan, showed himself grateful to Jesus. This story prefigures the future mission of the apostles, who, driven out by the faithless people of Judea, turned away and preached with immense success to the Samaritans and the Gentiles. Thus, by a hidden but just judgement of God, the "pariahs" of the Jewish religion, that is, the schismatics of Samaria and the pagans, become the firstfruits of the new Messianic kingdom, whilst the heirs of Abraham and of David contemptuously renounce the inheritance of the Faith.

The Offertory is drawn from Psalm xxx, and is identical with that of the Tuesday after the First Sunday in Lent. "In thee, O Lord, have I hoped: I said, Thou art my God, my times are in thy hands." When our times are in God's hands, all things must turn to our greater good, since that which God does is done through love, and that love which is good knows how to give good gifts to its sons.

In the Secret—the prelude to the consecratory anaphora—we implore God in his compassion to accept favourably the prayers and offerings of his faithful people, so that, by the merits of the Sacrifice, we may obtain not only the pardon of our sins, but also those graces for which we pray. The order of these petitions is grand. First comes the prayer of propitiation, that the holy Sacrifice, which in itself cannot be otherwise than pleasing to God, may meet with no obstacle in the unworthiness of the suppliants. Next we pray for the fruits of the Eucharist, and in the first place for the remission of the consequences of sin, such as temporal punishment, dis-

ordered passions, etc. Lastly, follow the various benefits, both spiritual and temporal, which the soul, cleansed by the holy Sacrifice, may suitably ask of God. We speak of the soul cleansed by the holy Sacrifice, because such gifts are for the friends of God, and as long as the soul is still in the position of a debtor or of a culprit before his judgement-seat, it cannot claim those special favours which are granted only to his loved ones : *Qui non placet, non placat.*

The Communion comes from the Book of Wisdom (xvi, 20), and describes the qualities of the manna, which is a symbol of the Eucharist. " Thou hast given us, O Lord, bread from heaven, having in it all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste." The Holy Eucharist is this bread with " the sweetness of every taste " because in it we receive not just one particular grace alone, but the author of all grace himself, and because, since it produces its effects according to the dispositions of those who receive it, it is wonderfully adapted to all their needs and desires, in such a manner that it is the divine food of all the sons of God—*Vere panis filiorum*—suitable to all ages, to all states, and to all conditions of life.

In the Post-Communion, which is also that of Monday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent (i.e., *in Mediana),* we pray that Holy Communion may increase in us more and more the efficacy of the redemption. In what manner is this brought about? By multiplying our good works. According to scholastic terminology, theologians distinguish between the decree of predestination, fixed once for all, and the execution of this decree, which takes place in time, and progresses gradually in accordance with our increase of virtue. Such, generally speaking, is the meaning of to-day's Thanksgiving prayer, when it asks that Holy Communion may be equivalent to an increase of eternal redemption. It does not mean that there are degrees in the work of salvation accomplished by Christ, but that the fruits of the Holy Eucharist—that is, the acts of virtue and holiness which it produces—represent a genuine progress towards a nearer realization of the wonderful scheme of our eternal salvation.

By what tremendous mystery do the Samaritans, that is, the souls least privileged by God, sometimes show themselves the more grateful for his benefits? This comes about because, being filled with humility and an intense desire for the things of God, their dispositions arc more favourable to the operations of grace ; whereas, on the contrary, many privileged souls, who are overwhelmed with good things, show themselves at times, like the Jews, satiated with the heavenly manna and receive it with indifference, through mere habit and without any real desire for it.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Quarta post Sancti Laurentii.

It is the time of the harvest, when almost all the citizens of Rome are leaving their seven hills and flocking to the suburban districts to enjoy the country air. The liturgy of this Sunday is, therefore, most appropriate, for it teaches us to have a filial trust in the divine Providence which feeds the birds of the air and clothes with brilliant colours the flowers of the field.

The Introit is derived from Psalm Ixxxiii : " Behold, O God our protector, and look on the face of thy Christ." This is the true motive for which God bestows his favours upon us. He has predestined us in his Christ as the *pleroma* of his glory, and it is in him and through him that he loves us as the members of his mystical body. If the eternal Father does not consider us at all in our own unworthy personality, but always in relation to Christ, why should we wish to shut ourselves up in a harmful egoism instead of constantly pondering on that which we really are in Christ?

In the Collect we confess before God our extreme wretchedness. That *superbia vitae* which forms the pride of the worldly is here described as *humana mortalitas,* which without God *labitur*—that is, falls back into misery and evil. We need, therefore, the divine grace to raise us up and sustain us ; so we ask that this grace may be generously given to ourselves and to the whole Church, that it may be a protection against the allurements of evil, lest they lead us astray, and that it may urge us on to work out our salvation by such good deeds as shall merit eternal life.

How full of theological doctrine are these Sunday Collects of the Missal, and how advantageously the early forms of prayer derived their inspiration from the purest sources of revealed truth rather than from mere sentiment?

The Epistle comes from that of St Paul to the Galatians (v, 16-24). The Law was simply a curb to the lusts of the flesh, of which St Paul mentions various manifestations, whereas the Christian is ruled by the Holy Spirit, who engenders in the soul works of penitence, charity, goodness, and joy. From these signs it is easy to know by which spirit a man is guided. Further, the universal marks common to all the friends of Christ are pain and suffering, joyfully borne for love of him.

The Gradual is similar to that of the Friday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, and is from Psalm cxvii : " It is good to confide in the Lord rather than to have confidence in man.

It is good to trust in the Lord rather than to trust in princes." The reason of this is that God's love is eternal and is freely given, while the benefits which we receive from our fellow-creatures are temporary, and are often given from motives of self-interest. Therefore St Paul says : " God is true, and every man a liar." Who, then, can place reliance upon the inconstancy and duplicity of human nature?

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from Psalm xciv : "Come, let us praise the Lord with joy; let us joyfully sing to God our Saviour." This is the true spirit of Christianity, a spirit, not, indeed, of a tremulous servitude toiling compulsorily under the lash of a taskmaster, but a spirit of liberty befitting a son who loves his Father's will and rejoices in doing it.

The Gospel, from St Matthew (vi, 24-33), warns us against any division in our affection to God. We cannot at the same time serve God and Mammon. We must first of all seek the Lord through the observance of his law, awaiting from his Providence all that is really necessary for the well-being of our body. This does not denote a certain fatalistic indifference which would lead us to remain in physical and mental idleness, leaving almighty God to provide all things for us miraculously ; it merely moderates our human activity and confines it within the limits established by God, who, whilst he commands us to labour for our necessities with the sweat of our brow, forbids us to throw ourselves into our labour with excessive ardour, as though man were altogether animal or material, or as if there existed no heavenly Providence to watch over him. The popular proverb : " Help yourself and God will help you," expresses truly the right order of things.

The Offertory is taken from the alphabetical Psalm, the thirty-third, and is like that of the Thursday after the First Sunday in Lent. " The angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear him, and shall deliver them : O taste and see that the Lord is sweet." The contrast between the fear of God and that of man is here well expressed. He who fears God is not subject to the fear of man, because in his inner consciousness respect for God's justice affects him far more powerfully than all the threats of the world, and that this is so is constantly shown in the case of the martyrs.

Further, this holy fear of God, which is the foundation of all Christian perfection and the beginning of the knowledge of sanctity, is a gift of the Holy Ghost, and God, by the ministry of his angels, jealously guards within us that which is his own. Hence the Psalmist tells us of the angel of the Lord who keeps watch round about the soul which fears God, a true fortress in which dwells the divine Paraclete. Lastly, the Psalmist appeals to the soul's experience of spiritual gifts, because the sweetness of the divine consolation far

exceeds all human delights, and is such that only he who has tasted it can understand what it is : *quod nemo sett, nisi qui accipit,* as we read in the Apocalypse.

In the Secret we beseech our heavenly Father that the sacrifice which is about to be offered up for the salvation of the world may accomplish two special results : firstly, that it may wash away in the blood of Christ the sins of those who offer the sacrifice ; and secondly, that it may so appease the divine omnipotence that grace may fill the void and make up for the deficiencies of our weak human nature.

The Communion is derived from to-day's Gospel : " Seek ye first the kingdom of God " in your souls by a thorough carrying out of the duties of your state. This is why virtue is termed in the Gospel ""justice." When the Gospel tells us that this must be our first aim, it docs not exclude, indeed it rather implies, that we are also to seek that which is necessary or suitable to sustain our material existence. It teaches us, however, that in this twofold duty—so well expressed in the Lord's Prayer—the established order must be maintained. First God, then the soul, and, lastly, the body. It is our duty to act, to work, and what we do not succeed in accomplishing, God himself will make good.

The Post-Communion expresses a similar idea to that contained in the Secret : May Holy Communion purify from their sins those who are here gathered together, and strengthen their virtue with eucharistie graces in such a manner that the sacred Mysteries in which they have participated here as pledges of the heavenly life, may also be to them a sacrament of eternal salvation.

What inspiration for holy thoughts did not the saints find in the pure beauty of nature, in the green fields, and in the delicate colouring of the flowers, things hardly noticed by a mind dulled by sensuality and worldliness ! If God so loves the least of the grasses of the meadow and the smallest of the insects that live therein as to provide for their subsistence by a marvellous ordering of nature, how much greater care will he not take of the follower of Christ, in whom he acknowledges the image of his first-born Son Jesus? ""Think of me," said the Lord one day to St Catherine of Siena, " and I will think of thee." Let us trust in God, let us devote ourselves to the interests of his glory, and he will safeguard those of our salvation.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Quinta post Sancti Laurentii.

This is the last of the stations named after the Cross-bearer of the basilica on the Via Tiburtina. The cycle of the Sundays following the feast of St Lawrence was succeeded at Rome by those grouped around the feast of St Cyprian, and later around that of St Michael. These feasts really served in regard to the Sunday cycle as so many milestones, to mark the succession of the different weeks, and had no special connection with the saint whose name they bore.

The Introit is taken from Psalm lxxxv : " Bow down thine ear, O Lord, to me, bow down thine ear from thy throne on high to where I lie prostrate in dust and ashes. Bow down thine ear because I raise up my prayer to thee, and the voice of prayer has so much power over thy heart that thou dost turn at once to where the suppliant lies who invokes thee. I am indeed a sinner ; but I am also thy servant, something which is thine own, which belongs to thee. I do not deserve that thou shouldst hear my first cry, but behold, I have cried to thee all day long, and thou art not wont to try thy servants beyond their strength. Have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy on me, according to the hope and the trust which I have placed in thee."

In the Collect we beg that the continual mercy of God may ever cleanse and defend his Church, for in this world we do not see the triumph of God's justice so much as that of his mercy. Moreover, as, without his help, the Church cannot resist her enemies, nor supply the deficiencies of weak human nature in her own members, we further pray that the divine grace may effectually govern all her actions.

In the Lesson from the Epistle to the Galatians (v, 25-26; vi, 1-10) St Paul speaks chiefly of charity with reference to our dealings with our neighbours ; of avoiding selfishness and envy, and of bearing with each other and mutually correcting one another. This present life is the time for sowing ; when the time for harvesting comes we shall reap that which we have sown, and that will be our provision for all eternity.

The Gradual is from Psalm xci, and is the same as that for Saturday after the Second Sunday in Lent. " It is good to give praise to the Lord ; and to sing to thy name, O most High. To show forth thy mercy in the morning, and thy truth in the night." Prayer is a necessity of the soul, and is, as it were, the breath of its life. Therefore the saints devoted to prayer the greater part of their day, or, as in the words of the psalm, both the morning and the night. In the night we

praise the faithfulness of God, because spiritual dryness, which is the night of the soul, is intended to strengthen our faith in his promises. In the morning we praise the goodness of God, because the morning expresses the light and the joy of the soul, which, feeling itself inspired by divine grace, sings a hymn of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord.

The alleluiatic verse, taken from Psalm xciv, is a continuation of that of the preceding Sunday. " The Lord is a great God and a great king over all the earth." If we only realized, as a fact, this divine superiority over all creation, and especially over our own will, how much more promptly should we accept the adorable will of God as the supreme rule of all our actions?

The Gospel, according to St Luke (vii, τ 1-16), which is also that for the Thursday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, with its account of the resurrection of the widow's son at Naim, contains a type of the intercession of the Church for the sake of whose tears God recalls sinners to life. These tears arc the prayers of the Church, but those who desire to be raised up by Christ in all certainty should have recourse to our great Mother the Church in the sacrament of penance ; for it is there, as St Ambrose says, that the tears and prayers of the Church become effective through the divine institution : *ex opere operato*—a pleasing allusion to the early deprecative formula for sacramental absolution. Christ cannot remain indifferent to the tears and supplications of his Spouse; therefore that spiritual resurrection which perhaps we should not deserve on account of our sins is granted to us in consideration of her who intercedes for us.

The Offertory, from Psalm xxxix, is a repetition of that of the Tuesday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent : " With expectation I have waited for the Lord, and he had regard to me; and he heard my prayer, and he put a new canticle into my mouth, a song to our God." Man is impatient, and when he prays he wishes to see at once the result of the prayers that he has offered for some special object. The prayer of faith, on the other hand, is patient and unwearied, because, leaning upon God's promise, it awaits in quietude the hour which he has chosen to come to our assistance. This is the profound meaning of that warning of Isaias : *Qui credit, non festinet.*

In the Secret we pray God that the power of the Holy Sacrament may protect us, above all, against the wiles of Satan. This is a thought on which to dwell earnestly. We know that the devil is the spirit of hatred, and that if he had the power he would harm and destroy us all. Satan once said to a certain saint : " I am a wretched being who cannot love." Before the incarnation of the Word of God, Satan

claimed to be the real and undisputed ruler of this world, and cases of diabolical possession were very frequent even in Palestine, but after the preaching of the Gospel these cases gradually became fewer in number, and the power of the devil in all its horror was confined to savage and idolatrous races, among whom it still exerts a cruel tyranny.

If we wish to discover to what cause we may attribute the weakening of this power of evil among Catholic nations and the comparative rarity of the obsessed, we may find the answer in the Liturgy of the Church. In Catholic countries our Lord resides sacramentally in too many tabernacles in the towns, villages, and hamlets for the devil to be able to approach those places. Again, the Church, with her sacramentals, holy water, sacred relics, etc., raises about her Catholic people, as it were, a wall of fire which the devil does not dare to pass. We do not mean to say by this that we arc entirely free from diabolical temptations—the Gospel itself testifies to the contrary—but the devil, like a chained dog, may bark at us as much as he pleases, he has no longer any power to harm us, unless we, of our own accord, approach and deliberately place ourselves within his reach.

The Antiphon for the Communion, like that one appointed for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, is drawn from the Gospel of St John (vi, 52), and is an exception to the general rule. It is common also to the Thursday after the First Sunday in Lent, and expresses concisely the twofold character of sacrifice and sacrament which we acknowledge in the Holy Eucharist. " The bread that I will give," this is the Sacrament which nourishes the spiritual life of the soul, " is my flesh for the life of the world," this is the sacrifice of universal expiation.

In the prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion we ask that the working of the Sacrament may restrain and correct the inclinations of our body and of our soul, that nature may no longer rule in us, but grace alone. In this manner the Holy Eucharist produces its full effect upon us, and makes us partakers of the life of Christ according to the promise of the Saviour : *Et qui manducat inc et ipse vivet propter me.*

Also in to-day's Post-Communion we can find material for a complete treatise on the spiritual effects of the Eucharist. After the preliminary cleansing of the senses and faculties of the soul, when grace has taken full possession of our spirit and dominates it entirely, the true kingdom of God begins within us. Nature then receives so severe a blow that it no longer dares to rebel, and the Holy Ghost guides the soul and all its faculties in whatever direction it may please him.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Prima post natale Sancti Cypriani.

On this Sunday, which inaugurates a new liturgical cycle around the feast of St Cyprian, at the approach of autumn, begin the lessons from the Epistle to the Ephesians, which will continue until the Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, with the exception of a short interruption on the Eighteenth Sunday, which originally was aliturgical—that is, the Sunday after Ember Saturday in September. It is interesting to note how even the exceptions that sometimes disturb the order of the liturgical cycle which we are now describing may help to prove its great antiquity and render it all the more venerable and dear to us. The study of the sacred Liturgy thus considered in its various stratifications is, therefore, the study of the history of Catholic prayer throughout the ages.

The Introit is from Psalm lxxxv : " Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I have cried to thee all the day ; for thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee." This cry expresses the irresistible longing of the soul for God when it is far from him. God, indeed, not only represents the soul's highest good, but is also the end and aim of a powerful attraction and of an insatiable need of the human spirit which can find no peace apart from him.

The Collect declares the absolute necessity of grace as a remedy for our corrupt nature. This grace, this supernatural force, which is called grace, because it is not merited by human nature as such, has its origin in the voluntary love of God for man. Grace precedes the good actions of our free will, because whilst it moves the will to desire the supernatural good, that is God, as its final aim, it confers on it at the same time the strength to will it, and to will it according to its own nature—that is to say freely and by spontaneous determination.

Nor is this all : the grace which has moved the will to the act of volition accompanies, so to speak, this act and wholly pervades it so that both the act and the end and aim of the act—that is, the volition—may be truly supernatural and worthy of eternal life. As we see, our nature is so weak that it cannot stand alone nor do anything towards our ultimate supernatural aim without the help of grace. This truth of our holy Faith must make us very humble in the sight of God.

In the Epistle (Eph. iii, 13-21) St Paul touches on some of the most sublime doctrines concerning the spiritual life of the Christian. The Eternal Father, the essential source of all paternity, by means of the grace of the Holy Ghost, re-

generates us according to the image of his Christ, so that Jesus may live and dwell in our hearts. His life must, therefore, develop in us as fully as possible, raising us up to the experimental knowledge of his infinite wisdom and love—that which constitutes the true knowledge of the saints. We should note the final doxology in which the glory of God is intimately connected and associated with that of Christ and the Church.

The Gradual is derived from Psalm ci, which is sung also on the Third Sunday after the Epiphany. " The Gentiles shall fear thy name, O Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. For the Lord hath built up Sion, and he shall be seen in his majesty." These verses have a Messianic touch, for they allude to the foundation of the Church, under the figure of the temple of the hill of Sion, and to the triumph of the Gospel, a triumph sealed by numberless miracles and wonders among all the nations of the earth.

The alleluiatic verse belongs to Psalm xcvii. ** Sing ye to the Lord a new canticle, because the Lord hath done wonderful things." The wonderful thing which the Lord has done in the world is the incarnation of his Christ. The new canticle, as St Augustine explains, is the new law of love, which does away with the ancient law of fear and stern justice. Song comes naturally to the lips of him who loves, and God, in order to render the yoke of the Gospel light and easy to us, has continually inebriated us with the Holy Ghost. *Lacti bibamus sobriam ebrietatem spiritus,* sang St Ambrose. Thus the observance of the law is no longer burdensome to us, for the Paraclete himself enkindles in our hearts a fervent zeal to accomplish it. *Deus meus volui, et legem tuam in medio cordis mei.* Of such is the new canticle, which springs from the newly found love.

The Gospel Lesson (Luke xiv, 1-11) narrates first the cure of a man with dropsy, and goes on to speak of the spiritual interpretation which is to be placed on the Sabbath Day's rest; a rest which does not forbid works of charity, especially in cases of necessity. Then follows our Lord's teaching concerning the virtue of Christian humility and modesty, which should prompt us always to take the lowest place, as being the one most fitting. If we are called by God or by our superiors to fill a more honourable post, the initiative must come from them, we must not put forward any claim to it ourselves. The lowest seat is the one which we should feel that our worthlessness deserves, and, if we eventually do occupy a higher place, that it will only be by a condescension, a kindly favour granted to us by others, and not something brought about through our ambition and pride.

The Offertory, which is similar to that of the Friday after

the Second Sunday in Lent, is a portion of Psalm xxxix: "O Lord, I am weighed down by the hatred, the calumny, and the violence of my enemies." These enemies are Satan and his allies—that is, the world and our own undisciplined passions. "Look down, O Lord, to help me; let them be confounded and ashamed that seek after my soul, to take it away. Look down, O Lord, to help me." God looks down upon us when he approves of our actions and confers new grace upon us to reward us for our efforts against the enemy.

In the Secret we pray that our hearts may be so purified by the merits of the Sacrament that the sacramental Communion of the body of Christ may unite us closely to him, both in heart and in mind, and that we who partake thereof may never be separated from his embrace.

The verses for the Communion, taken from Psalm lxx, are identical with those for the Thursday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent. "O Lord, I will be mindful of thy justice alone: thou hast taught me, O God, from my youth; and unto old age and grey hairs, O God, forsake me not."

The Psalmist proclaims the justice—that is, the ineffable sanctity—of Jehovah alone, for what is the virtue of creatures compared to the sanctity of the Creator but a mass of weakness and infirmity, hidden under the cloak of the divine mercy, and adorned with the jewels of his grace? God has led the Psalmist from his earliest youth, he has trained him and has raised him up to the highest honour, to the very throne of Israel. But now the Psalmist sees that glory and power are but fugitive and transient, that with old age bodily strength decays, and that even before death a man often beholds the passing of his brief dominion; therefore he prays: O Lord, forsake me not in my old age; when nature fails, may thy grace uphold me, and when this earthly tabernacle crumbles away, receive thou me into thine imperishable and heavenly mansions.

In the Post-Communion we beseech God that he would cleanse our consciences—that is, that he would remove all the stains with which the heirs and successors of Adam have disfigured the beautiful image of God. A new life, of which the spirit of Jesus Christ is the source, must succeed to the old life. This is the meaning of the renewal of which the Missal here speaks. It is thus that the Eucharist becomes the antidote of the poisonous apple of Eden, and fulfils that which the tree of life stood for in that garden.

The Church asks to-day for a double grace; that Holy Communion may be the pledge not only of health for the body, but also of eternal salvation for the soul. This maternal care which the Church shows for our bodies should not surprise us. It could not be otherwise, if we consider

that the forbidden fruit poisoned both sources of life: that of the soul by original sin, and that of the body by concupiscence and by inclination to sin and aversion from virtue.

St Paul associates the Church with Christ in the supreme glorification of God, inasmuch as Jesus Christ, by means of his mystical body, and especially through his sacred ministers, renders to the Father a perfect worship in spirit and in truth. This essential, necessary, and perfect worship is given to God through the sacred Liturgy, the inspired form of Catholic devotion, which devotion will be the more complete in each individual according as he partakes in the spirit of this chief act of worship of our Mother the Church.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Secunda post natale Sancti Cypriani.

Die dominico (statio) ad Sanctos Cosmae et Damiano ante natale eorum.

The Sunday has arrived which, according to the order of the Missal, precedes the great autumn fast, called in old days the fast of the seventh month. The Popes were in the habit of announcing it to the people, exhorting them at the same time to penance and almsgiving.

It is worthy of remark how insistently they dwelt on this latter point. The Christian fast was not instituted merely in the interest of health or of economy—that is, as a money-saving arrangement—but aims at the correction of vices and the practice of charity by sharing with the poor the value of that which is saved by abstinence. At first this fast, established originally at Rome, seems to have been intended to give a Christian stamp and direction to the ancient rustic feasts of the pagans at the time of the vintage. For this reason the solemnity with its processions through the streets of the city and the suburbs remained in force, but the Mass, which was decidedly festal in character, was preceded by the fast, as though to render primarily to God the firstfruits of the autumn season.

Usually on the Sundays before the fast of the *IV Tempora* —or rather of the *III Tempora,* as the early Christians called them, since the fast of the spring season is included in that of Lent—St Leo the Great announced it to the people in a splendid homily. Among the works of the saintly doctor there have been preserved nine homilies on the Ember fasts; but all treat in general of abstinence and almsgiving, and none has any reference to the Gospel Lesson of the Sunday. The final formula with which he proclaims the fast is usually

the following : *Quarta igitur et sexta feria jejunemus ; sabbato vero apud beatum Petrum Apostolum vigilias celebremus.*[1] The Saturday fast is not explicitly mentioned, since, according to the Roman rite, it was considered as an extension of that of the Friday. From the first it was so complete that it did not come to an end until the dawn of the Sunday—that is, after the Mass of the vigil had been celebrated at St Peter's.

In the Wurzburg Codex a station is appointed for to-day at the title of the Anargyri on the Via Sacra in preparation for their *natalis.* It must, however, be noted that this synaxis was a movable one, as it was fixed for the Sunday which preceded September 27, on which day Rome kept the festival of the holy martyrs Cosmas and Damian.

The Introit is drawn from Psalm cxviii, which, on account of the words *Beati immaculati in via,* was used in Rome as a processional psalm, and was consequently sung in the afternoon of Good Friday when the stational procession moved from the Lateran to the Sessorian Basilica. " Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgement is right;" but with thy servant, who commends himself to thy mercy and entreats thee not to enter into judgement with him according to thy overwhelming sanctity, do thou deal according to thy mercy, which in this present life is above all thy works.

God acts towards us in the manner that we ourselves have chosen. If we exercise our rights over our neighbour harshly, if we do not desire to forgive him his offences towards us, if we do not give alms to the poor, we shall provoke God to adopt the same measure of severity towards ourselves in the last judgement as we shall have used in this life towards himself and our brethren—that is, towards the members of his mystical body. If, on the contrary, being in doubt as to the justice of our cause, we cry to God for mercy, let us first show mercy ourselves, for this is what St Paul exhorts us to do, when he bids us in the name of the Lord to become followers of God, as most dear children.[2]

It is said that the Emperor Maurice of Constantinople, who, in spite of all the exhortations and remonstrances of St Gregory the Great, had promulgated several laws infringing on the liberty of the Church, and had abandoned Italy to the barbarians, exclaimed in the opening words of the Psalmist : *Justus es Domine, et rectum judicium tuum*—when Phocas, the usurper of the Imperial throne, caused the Emperor's sons to be put to death before his eyes.

1 *Patrol. Lat.* (Migne) LTV, col. 460. " Let us fast on *feria IV* and /«■io *VI;* and on Saturday next let us further celebrate the holy vig.il at the tomb of the blessed Apostle Peter." * Eph. v 1. J

The Collect is wonderfully beautiful, and can well be applied to that diseased curiosity regarding spiritualistic manifestations which affects modern society. To many persons spiritualism seems to represent a reaction against materialism, and they do not realize that the devil, in order to deceive and pervert souls, is ever ready to transform himself into an angel of light and conceal his insidious lies under an appearance of truth. The Church here defines in two words the whole nature of this fatal spiritualistic and theosophical movement which has so many followers at the present time, as "diabolical defilements." Here we see a terrible judgement of God. He who refuses to humble himself before the wisdom of God revealed through the Church, the pillar and buttress of eternal truth, deserves to be humiliated and to fall a victim to the deceit of the devil.

The passage from the Epistle to the Ephesians (iv, 1-6) vigorously impresses upon us the idea of the unity of the Christian family, a unity founded on the identity of the Spirit which inspires all the members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ. God is one, the faith is one; there is one baptism and one bishop! With these words in olden days the Romans, making a tumult in the Circus, answered the heretical Emperor Constantius, when he proposed to allow the Antipope Felix II, whom he himself had appointed, to reside in peace beside Liberius, the staunch defender of the Nicene faith.

The Gradual is common to that used on the Wednesday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent—the Wednesday of the "Great Scrutinies"—and comes from Psalm xxxii. Whether by coincidence or design, it carries on the idea which the Epistle began to expound, for it calls the Christian people blessed whose Lord is the Most High, and whom God regards as his chosen inheritance in the midst of the apostasy of the world. The latter takes its pleasure in riches, power, and gold, whilst the faithful soul desires God alone as its one treasure. "All the rest," as a great queen, a convert to the Catholic faith, used to say, "is not sufficient for me, and is of no value to me."[1] The vault of heaven studded with stars sparkling like brilliants attests the power of God's word, as though to assure the soul that the arm on which it leans will not fail from weariness and fatigue.

The alleluiatic verse is from Psalm ci, and precedes almost all the solemn prayers of the Church: "O Lord, hear my prayer and let my cry come unto thee." Before beginning to pray the Liturgy teaches us to invoke God in these words, because a humble and confident spirit is the best preparation

[1] Queen Christina of Sweden died at Rome 1689. buried in St Peter's.—Ta.

for prayer. Confidence is at once expressed in this invocation, together with the simplicity proper to a son : " O Lord, hear my prayer." Humility is understood rather than manifest in the words that follow : May the cry which my need of thee has drawn from me and my extreme helplessness has forced from me reach thy ear even from this deep gulf, this abyss of abjection into which I have fallen : O Lord, thou who disdainest the words of the proud, bend thyself down to receive the prayer of the humble.

The Gospel (Matt, xxii, 34-46) treats of the great commandment of the Law, which Jesus declares to be the love of God and of our neighbour. We should note that our Saviour had been questioned by the Pharisees concerning the chief precept of the Jewish moral code. Though he here points to God and our neighbour as the two objects of our love, yet in reality the love is but one, since we have to love our neighbour with a supernatural charity for the love of God, inasmuch as he is of God and belongs to God. The so-called philanthropy which aims at being Christian charity dechristianized never rises to this supernatural level. It is, moreover, a useless effort, because having once separated himself from God, the ultimate end of Christian charity, there is no reason for a man to love his neighbour to the point of self-sacrifice—that is, better than himself. There is not only no reason for it, but secular charity has not sufficient power to grasp the end which it seeks to attain.

Human nature is, as a rule, egotistical, and amongst our fellow-creatures there are many who, because of their physical and moral qualities, fail to make any appeal to our love. How is it possible to feel great affection for all these very unprepossessing neighbours? This is the question which Petronius asks in the great romance of Sienkiewicz.[1] To it non-Christian philanthropy can make no reply ; indeed, on all sides it shows itself unsuccessful. We see this every day in the case of the many organizations and charitable committees which sometimes collect considerable sums of money for the poor without showing any very satisfactory result for all the expenditure incurred.

How different is the spectacle offered to the world by the Catholic Church, the Roman Pontificate, that see which St Ignatius of Antioch in happy phrase describes as the President of Charity. There is no human suffering, whether physical or moral, which the Catholic Church does not comfort, mitigate, or heal to the best of her ability, by means of her chosen members, especially the religious corporations. There have been regular Orders who, by special vows, have given themselves up as prisoners in order to free slaves ;

1 Author of *Quo Vadit,*

others to serve the lepers of the Indies, the plague-stricken—in a word, the outcasts from human society.

All this, especially when carried out uninterruptedly on a vast scale by thousands and thousands of persons of every condition and of both sexes, clearly goes beyond man's strength, and, we must allow, shows that the source of this Catholic charity is indeed divine. In this manner the Church fulfils with heroic sanctity, even to sacrifice, the twofold precept of the love of God and of our neighbour. The love of God is displayed chiefly through the divine Liturgy, that of man by the works of which we have already spoken.

The Offertory is derived from the Book of Daniel (ix, 17-18), and shows the state of mind of the Romans in the early Middle Ages when the Eternal City was continually being exposed to the assaults of the Lombards. " I, Daniel, a captive in Babylon after the destruction of the temple "—the Lombards had destroyed hundreds of churches in Italy, putting to the sword bishops, priests, and monks—" prayed to my God, saying, Hear, O Lord, the prayer of thy servant and show thy face upon the desolate ruins of thy sanctuary. Look down favourably upon this people, upon whom, as a mark of perpetual benediction, thy holy name is invoked, and that which thou mightest refuse us because of our sins, grant to us for the sake of thy glory, of which Israel is the constant reflection."

In the Secret we beg that the sacrifice of the Eucharist, whilst propitiating God for our past sins, may also defend us from future transgressions. This is the doctrine of the Fathers, summed up from the Council of Trent, on the operation of the Blessed Sacrament, wherein they teach that Holy Communion is the antidote by which we protect ourselves against daily falls. *Quotidie sume ut quotidie prosit.*

The Communion is from Psalm lxxv : " Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God, all you that round about him bring presents: to him that is terrible, even to him who taketh away the spirit of princes ; to the terrible with all the kings of the earth." Truly Jesus in the Eucharist is terrible to the evil spirits whom he envelops in the flames of his sanctity and his justice. He is terrible to sinners who, like Judas after taking the morsel at the Last Supper, receive Satan to their own condemnation. With the poor, on the contrary, who surround the altar in the simplicity of their hearts, and offer to God the sacrifice of a pure and fervent spirit, our Lord in the Eucharist is sweet and mild ; for, being full of condescension and knowing their poverty, he himself puts into their hands the gift which they are to offer him, *de tuts donis ac datis offerimus tibi hostiam puram.*

In the Post-Communion we pray that by the grace of the

Sacrament—the Missal calls it *Sanctificatio,* and St Ambrose *Consecratio,* inasmuch as the transubstantiation is the effect of a *Sanctificatio*—we may be granted a salutary medicine, to the healing of our spiritual wounds, so that, being strong in body and mind, we may be able to experience the full efficacy of the bread of eternal life, the remedy which gives us immortality. The Liturgy calls it the remedy " for evermore," because the Holy Eucharist is the anticipation and pledge of that immense good which God reserves for us in heaven, the remedy which will put an end to all the ills that crowd about the path of our earthly pilgrimage.

EMBER WEDNESDAY IN SEPTEMBER

Station at St Mary Major.

As we have already seen, the Liturgy of the Ember Day fasts possessed originally a distinctly festive quality, and was partly a festival of thanksgiving for the ingathering of the fruits of the season. It would seem that these rustic feasts originated at Rome—as was natural amongst a population which derived the chief source of its riches from the cultivation of the soil—and that it was from Rome that they spread by the influence of the Popes throughout Gaul, Germany, and Spain. The observance of the Ember Day fasts was only introduced into Milan in the days of St Charles Borromeo.

Preferably to any of the other seasons, the Liturgy of this week has kept to a great extent unchanged its early festive character, which recalls so vividly the rural feasts of ancient Rome at the close of the vintage, when, according to St Leo, *" pro consummata perceptione omnium frugum, dignissime largitori earum Dei continentiae offertur libamen.* [1]

The idea of a special preparation for the solemn ordinations represents a later addition, which, however, dates from the time of Gelasius I.

The station on Ember Wednesday is, as a rule, at St Mary Major, and the three Lessons in the Mass are a survival of the ancient Roman liturgical use, which recalls those very early times when to the two lessons from the Torah and the Prophets, customary in the synagogues of the Diaspora, the apostles added a third lesson taken from the Gospels.

The Introit comes from Psalm lxxx, and contains a happy allusion to the solemnity of this week which has a certain

[1] " It is most fitting that after having enjoyed the abundance of the harvest, we should offer to the Lord, the giver thereof, a holy libation, as it were, of abstinence." *(Serm. II de Jejun. X meni.)*

complex character in its liturgy, because, whilst keeping intact the recollection of the Latin feast of the vintage, it also appears as the Christian continuation of the two Jewish festivals, that of the beginning of the New Year and that of the day of Expiation. The Psalmist, therefore, calls upon Israel to sound the cymbals, to strike the harp and the lyre, and to blow the trumpet at the beginning of the seventh new moon—which in ancient times was the commencement of the Jewish year—for this is a sacred tradition in Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.

Here, then, we see the divine authority from which the liturgical feasts took their rise. Besides the private and individual worship through which every creature must offer the homage of his adoration to the Creator, God has willed that the society of the faithful, precisely because it is an outward and visible society, should have social and collective festivals together with rites and ceremonies in order to render to the Creator the due homage of the society as such, as well as to provide the individual through these social acts with the means of acquiring personal holiness. Isolation is condemned : *vae solis !* Man is naturally a sociable being, because only through civilized association with his fellowmen can he attain to his natural perfection.

In the supernatural order, on the other hand, the Christian forms part of a divine society, which is the Church, since through her alone is he able to obtain the means necessary to his individual sanctification. We should be careful not to ignore this truth, not to exaggerate our own individuality, and not to sacrifice external, social, and liturgical worship to a form of religion excessively internal and spiritual and exclusively personal. We are not in ourselves the whole body of Christ, each of us is but one of its members. In order, then, that this mystical body may be preserved intact, it is necessary that the members shall not be separated either from the head or from each other.

Jesus gave us an example of this piety, which is now termed liturgical, and which we would prefer to call simply Christian piety in its most perfect signification. He himself, at first in his holy family, and later in company with his apostles, took part in the liturgical solemnities of the Synagogue. At the appointed times he used to go up to the temple to celebrate there the Pasch, the feast of the dedication, and that of tabernacles. We may indeed say, according to that which the saints have told us, that his life was one continuous prayer, for after whole nights spent in prayer, he passed his day, both at Jerusalem and elsewhere, in the synagogues or in the temple, being constantly present at the daily service of psalmody and at the sacrifices there celebrated.

After the *Kyrie* follows the Collect, which anciently was regarded as its normal conclusion. In this prayer, which concludes the prostration and the private supplications of the whole assembly, the priest calls to mind that our frail nature corrupted by original sin, is already bowed down under the weight of the ills which are the wretched inheritance of sin. He therefore, as the one hope of deliverance, invokes the ineffable mercy of God upon this prostrate and humbled nature, which, having laid aside its former pride—the *superbia vitae* of St John—now feels all the shame of its decadence.

In the comforting Lesson from Amos (ix, 13-15) the fertility of the promised land is painted in glowing colours, that land in which the time of reaping is extended to the vintage, and the vintage prolonged to the season of sowing. These sacred prophecies not only have a spiritual meaning, but promise material prosperity to the nations which observe the divine commandments.

The Gradual is drawn from Psalm cxii, in which is praised the excellence of Jehovah, who looks down not only on the earth, but even on the heights of heaven as on the depths of an abyss. Although the Lord is enthroned on high, yet humility has power to draw him to itself. From this exalted throne he hears the voice of him who is lowly and wretched, and, coming down swiftly to his aid, he raises him up and carries him off in his arms until he brings him to the highest place in his heavenly kingdom.

As a conclusion to the Lesson and the Gradual, the presiding priest recites a prayer, in which the divine grace is besought, so that the spotless lives of the faithful may accord with their abstinence from food by refraining from all that may lead them into sin. Here is the text of this beautiful prayer. " Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, to thy servants who humbly pray to thee ; that while they abstain from bodily food, in their minds, too, they may fast from sin."

The Lesson, from the Book of Nehcmias* (viii, i-io), describes the solemn promulgation of the Law, carried out by the Prophet after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, on the first day of the seventh month. The invitation, with which it concludes, to celebrate a feast of thanksgiving to the Lord, although it has a purely symbolical and spiritual meaning in the Missal, yet reveals the primitive character of these ancient Roman feasts expressive of the greatest joy and gratitude to the Lord, the generous giver of the fruits of the earth.

The second Gradual comes from Psalm xxxii, and is like

* Or Second Book of Esdras.

that of last Sunday. " Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord," because, whilst all other rulers exercise power to their own advantage, God alone creates and governs because he loves, that is because he desires our good, which is the immediate consequence of love. If he wills us this good, then he will certainly give it to us, since he is the source of this good: *diffusivum sui;* unlike the changeable and unsatisfying love of creatures, who often either will not or cannot give us this good because they do not possess it themselves.

The passage from the Gospel of St Mark (ix, 16-28) relates the healing of the boy possessed with a deaf and dumb spirit, and speaks of the necessity of prayer and fasting in order to obtain power over unclean spirits. Indeed, there is nothing more debasing to a man than a life given up to the pleasures of the senses. The devil, asserting the superiority of his own nature over such sensual beings, takes pleasure in degrading them by the most shameful falls. Humble prayer, on the other hand, and fasting spiritualize our nature, which is thus raised to a supernatural state, and render it invulnerable to the fatal blows of Satan.

The Offertory is from Psalm cxviii, and is identical with that of the Second Sunday in Lent *{Dominica vacat).* " I will meditate on thv commandments, which I have loved exceedingly : and lift up my hands to thy commandments, which I have loved." This was the very object of the liturgical synaxes, especially of those which were protracted in olden days until the hour of None—namely, to study the holy Law of God; not from mere intellectual curiosity, but in order to renew the conscience in accordance with a higher standard, the divine will itself. A well-known poet expressed this thought when he wrote that a new book is less than nothing, if being written, it does not renew the mind of the people.

The Secret is also that of the Third Sunday after the Epiphany. " May this victim, we beseech thee, O Lord, cleanse away our sins." The expression is in the singular *haec hostia,* because although formerly several two-handled chalices intended for the Communion of the bishop, the clergy, and the people, besides various loaves, were placed on the *mensa,* yet these oblations, though offered by individual members of the community, represented but one single collective and social oblation, by which the whole body of Christian people consecrated the solemnity to God. The effect of this divine condescension for which we beg is the purification of our consciences, so that not only the bodies but still more the souls of all who take part in offering the eucharistie sacrifice may be sanctified.

Interior sanctity alone is then not enough, especially for priests who have to take into their hands the tremendous mysteries of our altars. We will say with the author of the *Imitation of Christ* how pure those eyes should be which are accustomed to gaze on the body of Christ; how spotless, even more than the rays of the sun, should be those hands which, whilst the angels standing around the holy table tremblingly adore, break the sacred species—thus signifying the violent separation of the soul of Jesus from his body at the moment of his death—and distribute the particles to the faithful in Holy Communion.

The Communion is derived from the passage of Esdras already given. It does not seem in truth very suitable for a fast day, but we must remember the festive tone which this Mass had originally, and still more the circumstance that in ancient times the Mass, protracted until the hour of None, as usually happened on a fast day, brought the abstinence to an end, so that after the Communion the faithful were free to prepare the table and refresh themselves after the long fast which they had kept almost until darkness fell.

We may also regard the material pleasures and rewards granted to the Israelites as a symbol of the spiritual graces which are conceded in the new law to the disciples of Christ. The life of a Christian, with its numerous mortifications, is like a long drawn-out period of fasting. When it is ended, God will prepare a banquet in heaven—Isaias calls it the vintage feast—and will refresh his saints, satisfying, according to his promise in the Gospel, all those who, when on earth, suffered from hunger and thirst after righteousness—that is, after sanctity. Then the prophecy of Esdras will be fulfilled in its widest and truest sense. "Eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves; because it is the holy day of the Lord, be not sad: for the joy of the Lord is our strength."

In the Post-Communion we humbly entreat almighty God that the liturgical action and the divine sacrifice, by means of which we affirm outwardly our devout service to him, may be accompanied by worthy dispositions of the soul. Thus only can the sacramental participation in the mystery of the body and blood of Christ become, as St Augustine so well explains it, a participation in his spirit and his life.

The sure but gentle effect of divine grace in the soul is described to us by Amos, who likens it to the dew which falls silently on the flowers, fertilizing the lily and causing its blossom to give forth abundantly the sweet perfume of sanctity.

The Church in to-day's verse for the Communion insistently invites us to rejoice, and tells us that this holy joy in the Lord

is that which nourishes our spiritual strength. Indeed, sadness, in the way of perfection, usually denotes discouragement or want of faith. In spiritual conflicts, when the soul trusts in God's help, it has everything to hope for and nothing to fear, even should it suffer material losses, for these make but little difference when weighed in the scales of eternity.

EMBER FRIDAY IN SEPTEMBER

Station at the Twelve Holy Apostles.

The station at the Roman *Apostoleton* on Ember Friday is quite regular, the reason of which choice may perhaps be found in the circumstance that the institution of this solemnity—in the fourth century the Friday was aliturgical also at Rome—almost coincides with the foundation of this famous church, which rose to such great fame at Rome during the Byzantine period.

It should, however, be noted that the *aliturgia* of the Friday at Rome is not a primitive use, for we know from Tertullian that, in the third century, the fourth and sixth weekly *feriae,* on which the *statio* was celebrated with fasting until the hour of None, were solemnized by the offering of the eucharistie sacrifice. It is not impossible that the fast of the *III Tempora* on the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday was in some way connected with this ancient Roman custom of fasting three days in the week.

However, the strict devotion of the Apostolic age became somewhat lessened with time; therefore Pope Callixtus relaxed the severity of the fasting and limited it to the three periods of the harvest, the vintage, and the drawing off of the new wine, the more so as these corresponded to the biblical fasts of the third, sixth, and tenth months. In the liturgical documents of the Middle Ages we find numerous traces of this weekly sanctification of the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, the Lessons in the Mass of these three days being, for the most part, given in the ancient *Capitula* of Roman origin.

The Introit, which is the same as that of the Thursday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent, is from Psalm civ, and calls upon all those who seek the Lord to rejoice, for they shall surely find him, and shall quench their thirst for him in the fount of all good. Many who outwardly serve God are, in reality, seeking *quae sua sunt,* and shall find only themselves —that is, vanity and misery. " Seek the Lord only," says the Psalmist: " seek his face, seek him with sincerity and

truth, seek him evermore"—that is to say, with a single heart, not attempting any compromise between him and our corrupt nature.

St Benedict, in his *Regula Monachorum,* makes this searching after God the watchword of his foundation, the one condition by which is to be judged the vocation of aspirants to the religious life. He regards neither the birth nor the age, nor the acquirements of the novice; he is concerned only in discerning his spirit, as to whether he is, in reality, seeking after God, and if in so doing he is following the same road of humility and obedience as was marked out by Christ. There is no other true road but this one.

The Collect is similar to that of the Monday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent. "Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that while year by year we devoutly keep these holy observances, we may please thee both in body and mind." The meaning of this prayer is that mere ritual abstinence, as is practised nowadays by Mohammedans, is productive of little benefit. It is the soul which, by its sin, has contaminated also the body; hence the first purification must be begun where the disease first originated.

In the Lesson from Osee (xiv, 2-10) are described, in brilliant images drawn from the *flora* of Palestine, the abundant graces that God has in store for his people, whensoever they shall repent and, abandoning the worship of idols, shall return to the Lord their God. When we consider the tenderness shown by God to the prodigal soul, who comes to him full of contrition, it almost makes us think that God loves the repentant sinner more than the faithful disciple. This, however, is not so in reality, because the Lord loves souls in proportion to the good which he pours out upon them.

The Gradual, which is common to to-morrow's Mass and also to Ember Saturday in Lent, comes from Psalm lxxxix: "Return, O Lord, a little; and be entreated in favour of thy servants. Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation." God deals with us according to our dispositions. He withholds himself from us when we wander away from his paths. He does not listen to our words when we are deaf to his inspirations; and by reason of our passions, especially pride, our prayers rise with such difficulty up to him that they rather fall back on us like a weight, as is said in the Psalms: *et oratio mea in sinu meo convertetur.* It is necessary, then, in order that God may draw near to us, for us on our part to approach him with the conversion of a humble and contrite heart.

To-day's Gospel (Luke vît, 36-50)—relating the story of the conversion of Mary Magdalen, which is also the Gospel for Thursday in Passion Week—does not correspond to the

Würzburg list of Gospels, but it may be that the latter is inexact or that this is an alternative lesson. St Gregory the Great, in his thirty-third Homily, commentates upon the conversion of the Magdalen to the people assembled in the Basilica of St Clement, but we do not know on what occasion this took place.

The Offertory is taken from Psalm cii, and is a repetition of that of Ember Friday in Lent: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all he hath done for thee: and thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's." Meditation on the joys of eternal life is very helpful, not only by spurring us on to accumulate merits for heaven, but also by detaching our minds still more from the things of this world. Thus St Ignatius was accustomed to say: *Quam sordet tellus cum coelum adspicio.*

The Secret well describes in concise phrase the liturgical nature of the primitive Roman abstinence. No fast ever took place without the abstinence of the people being consecrated by the holy sacrifice and being offered to God in union with the passion of the Redeemer, for it was the sacrifice which marked the termination of the fast. Thus the eucharistie oblation, presented by the Christian community at the altar, is here called the common offering of our holy fast. The fruits which the faithful hope to derive from it are the expiation of sins, a fitting preparation for and a due co-operation with grace, and finally the attainment of the long-promised happiness of heaven.

We should note the order of this threefold effect. First the obstacle must be removed which prevents the soul from receiving the merciful inpouring of the Holy Ghost; and this may be done by arousing in it sentiments of faith and contrition which will bring it back to God. Next begins the life of grace in the soul, which requires, however, a strenuous cooperation of the will on man's part. *Non ego, sed gratia Dei mecum,* said St Paul. Lastly comes the final and definite development of this supernatural life when grace is transformed into the light of glory.

The Communion is drawn from Psalm cxviii: "Remove from me reproach and contempt, because I have sought out thy commandments, O Lord: for thy testimonies are my meditation."

Here, too, a deep meaning underlies the order of the Psalmist's words. From his youth upwards he has been enabled to keep the law of God in spite of the derision and scorn of his fellows and of the Sanhedrin, because by constant meditation on the word of God it has become part of his very being. He prays now to be delivered from reproach and contempt in the same sense that Christ prayed: "Father, the

hour is come, glorify thy Son, so that by his glory as Redeemer and Saviour of the human race, he may glorify thee and lead all to thy love."

Does so much strength of purpose and such proved virtue impress us in a prophet who calls himself *adolescentulus et contemptus ?* We need not wonder at this, he is nourished •with the bread of the strong, for he meditates assiduously on the word of God. It is not without profound significance that the holy Gospel, raising for a moment the veil which overshadows the immense sanctity of the Blessed Virgin, a sanctity which God alone can understand, tells us only this, that she kept in her heart the divine Word and pondered over it.

Mary kept in her heart the Word of God even before her virgin womb became the tabernacle of the Word made flesh ; she meditated upon this Word—that is, she lived interiorly by it; she uttered this Word to herself, seeking, as far as is possible to a creature, to imitate in this, too, the divine Father, who is ineffably blessed from all eternity in the utterance of his inseparable Word. This faithfulness of Mary in the contemplation of the divine Word was that which prepared her for the grace of the divine motherhood, a grace and dignity so great that it has none above it, except that of the eternal Fatherhood and the divine Spiration.

To-day's eucharistie prayer of thanksgiving is also the Post-Communion prayer of many feasts of saints. In it we render thanks to God for the gifts that we have already received, and beg him to grant us still greater blessings. This last phrase : *beneficia potiora,* is somewhat obscure from its very brevity. What blessings, then, can these be, for which we now ask, greater than the Holy Eucharist? The answer is not hard to find. The possession of Jesus in heaven is undoubtedly a greater grace than the receiving of him in Holy Communion, for our union with Jesus here on earth is illumined by faith alone, whereas in heaven the uncreated and divine light itself shines upon our union with him. Besides this, the sacramental union on earth of the communicant with Christ in the Eucharist is but an imperfect one, because it depends in a great measure on the subjective dispositions of the communicant ; whereas in heaven the union is perfect, since God himself by the rays of his glory completely penetrates the intellect of the blessed, fulfilling all their desires.

Moreover, in this life the grace given in the eucharistie Communion may be lost by mortal sin, whilst in heaven the beatific union excludes the possibility of any loss whatsoever or even any diminution in this union between the Creator and the creature. In conclusion, then, the Holy Eucharist is a great gift ; but it is at once the token and the anticipation of

an even greater reward to which we must always aspire, especially when we receive Holy Communion.

We will repeat in this connection the words of the angelic Doctor :

Jesu, quem velatum nunc adspicio,
Oro, fiat illud quod tam sitio,
Ut te revelata cernens facie,
Visu sim beatus tuae gloriae.

The paschal Lamb is a symbol of the Holy Eucharist. As the children of Israel were commanded to eat it in haste, ready to start on a journey, with staves in their hands, because they were to go out of Egypt and direct their steps towards Palestine; so Christians must draw near to the eucharistie banquet in a spirit of complete detachment from everything which belongs to this land of exile, and with a very great longing for heaven.

EMBER SATURDAY IN SEPTEMBER

Station and Vigil at St Peter's.

This Mass, which was celebrated during the night at St Peter's, is a last relic of the ancient night vigils held every Sunday during the first three centuries. The custom dates back to Apostolic times, but the last persecution under Diocletian must have rendered its observance impossible at Rome—Sixtus II had been surprised in the act of presiding over a Sunday synaxis in a *tricora* at the cemetery of Callixtus, and had paid for his courage with his life. Thus in the fourth century the ancient vigiliary rite having almost completely disappeared at Rome, only the vigils of the Apostles SS Peter and Paul, St Lawrence, SS John and Paul, and a few other martyrs still survived in common use, besides those which came after the Ember Saturdays.

Even to this day this Mass, with its seven Lessons and its verse for the Offertory from the Psalms : *In die clamavi et nocte,* still keeps some traces of its original nocturnal character.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xciv, and calls upon us to humble ourselves before the majesty of a just and merciful God ; just, because he consumes in the fire of his holiness all the imperfections of his children ; merciful, because even in the exercise of this justice he is guided by exceeding- love. " Come, let us adore God, and fall down before the Lord : let us weep before him who made us ; for he is the Lord our

God." To him is well known the weakness of our nature, because in the fulness of his condescension he took upon himself the burden oi our human flesh and endured the trials of our toilsome life.

After the *Kyrie eleison,* which here is not in its usual place, for, on account of the ordinations, it was deferred in Rome until after the Epistle, the following beautiful Collect is read as a conclusion :

℣. Let us pray. Let us kneel. Iÿ. Arise.

" Almighty and eternal God, who by healthful abstinence dost heal both our bodies and souls ; we humbly entreat thy majesty, that, appeased by the pious prayer of those who fast, thou wouldst give us help both now and in the future."

The first Lesson from Leviticus connects this week's fast with the Jewish fast attached to the Feast of Expiation, which was celebrated on the tenth day of the seventh month. It would seem, however, that this association of the autumn fast with the Jewish Feasts of Expiation only arose later, when a scriptural origin was attributed to many of the liturgical institutions of early days.

First Lesson from the Book of Leviticus (xxiii, 26-32).

In those days the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Upon the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the day of atonement ; it shall be most solemn, and shall be called holy ; and you shall afflict your souls on that day, and shall offer a holocaust to the Lord. You shall do no servile work in the time of this day; because it is a day of propitiation, that the Lord your God may be merciful unto you. Every soul that is not afflicted on this day shall perish from among his people ; and every soul that shall do any work the same will I destroy from among his people. You shall do no work, therefore, on that day : it shall be an everlasting ordinance unto you in all your generations and dwellings. It is a Sabbath of rest; and you shall afflict your souls, beginning on the ninth day of the month; from evening until evening you shall celebrate your Sabbaths, saith the Lord almighty.

The penance here alluded to consisted chiefly in the fast which lasted until sunset. By giving to the whole of this passage a much wider spiritual meaning, we can deduce from it the absolute necessity for the entire human race to do penance for its transgressions : *Nisi poenitentiam egeritis, omnes similiter peribitis.*

The Gradual from Psalm lxxviii is also that of Ember Saturday in Lent, after the first Lesson. It is a penitential

hymn, and is admirably suited to the passage from Leviticus which has just been read. The prayer recited by the priest forms a conclusion to the first Lesson.

℣. Let us pray. Let us kneel. ℟. Arise.

" Grant us, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that while we fast we may be filled with thy grace, and by abstinence may be made stronger than all our enemies."

The second Lesson from Leviticus follows in Holy Scripture on the first, and describes the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasted a whole week, being brought to a close by the Feast of Expiation. During this time, in memory of the tents that sheltered them in the desert during the first forty years of their wanderings after they came out of Egypt, the people of Israel lived in huts covered with palms and branches of trees, to which custom allusion is made in Psalm cxvii, 27. " Appoint a solemn day with shady boughs."

Second Lesson from the Book of Leviticus
(xxiii, 33, 39-43).

In those days the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, From the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you shall have gathered in all the fruits of your land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord seven days; on the first day and the eighth shall be a Sabbath—that is, a day of rest. And you shall take to you, on the first day, the fruits of the fairest tree, and branches of palm-trees, and boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God; and you shall keep the solemnity thereof seven days in the year: it shall be an everlasting ordinance in your generations. In the seventh month shall you celebrate this feast; and you shall dwell in bowers seven days: everyone that is of the race of Israel shall dwell in tabernacles, that your posterity may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles when I brought them out of the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm lxxxiii as on Ember Saturday in Lent. The prayer of the presiding priest fitly brings the responsorial chant to an end.

℣. Let us pray. Let us kneel. ℟. Arise.

" Protect thy family, we beseech thee, O Lord, that by thy bounty we may obtain those remedies of eternal salvation which, by thy inspiration, we seek."

The third Lesson from Micheas dwells upon the infinite mercy of God who pardons the sinner, and " casts all his sins

into the bottom of the sea," remembering only his mercy and the promises made to Abraham and his spiritual descendants.

Third Lesson from the Prophet Micheas (vii, 14, 16, 18-20).

O Lord our God, feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thy inheritance, them that dwell alone in the forest according to the days of old. The nations shall see, and shall be confounded at all their strength. Who is a God like to thee, who takest away iniquity and passest by the sin of the remnant of thy inheritance? He will send his fury in no more because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again and have mercy on us: he will put away our iniquities, and he will cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days of old: O Lord our God.

The Gradual is drawn from Psalm lxxxix, and is also sung at the great *Pannuchis* in Lent. In the beautiful prayer which follows there is brought out the twofold aspect of the Christian fast. Through it the body is kept under by penance so that the spirit may regain the mastery over it, and may have all the strength needed to dominate the outbreaks of its unruly passions.

℣. Let us pray. Let us kneel. Iÿ. Arise.

"Grant us, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we may so abstain from fleshly feasts, that we may also fast from the vices which assail us."

A passage from Zacharias comes next, in which the most loving promises of pardon for the penitent sinner who returns to God are contrasted with the former threats of vengeance upon evil-doers. True conversion is deep and comes from the heart, being evidenced by observance of the divine law, especially in its spiritual meaning. The Lord, on his part, will turn the days which once were days of mourning like the Jewish fasts of the fourth, seventh, and tenth month into so many springs of joy and prosperity for the new people who love truth and peace. This new era here foretold by the prophet is the Messianic kingdom.

Fourth Lesson from the Prophet Zacharias (viii, 14-19).

In those days: The word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, As I purposed to afflict you when your fathers had provoked me to wrath; and I had no

mercy; so turning again, I have thought in these days to do good to the house of Juda and Jerusalem : fear not. These, then, are the things which you shall do, Speak ye truth everyone to his neighbour, judge ye truth and judgement of peace in your gates ; and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his friend ; and love not a false oath : for all these are the things that I hate, saith the Lord. And the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying : Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Juda joy and gladness, and great solemnities ; only love ye truth and peace, saith the Lord of hosts.

The Gradual comes from Psalm cxl, the especial evening hymn ; it is common also to the Lenten *Pannuchis*. *After* which the prayer of the priest implores pardon for the sin of the people through the merits of the public and solemn fast observed by the Christian community at Rome—we must always bear in mind that we are speaking of a liturgical institution purely Roman.

℣. Let us pray. Let us kneel. ℟. Arise.

" As thou grantest to us, O Lord, to offer thee a solemn fast, so grant us, we beseech thee, the benefit of thy pardon."

This prayer is succeeded, as in the other *Pannuchides* of December and March, by the Lesson from Daniel iii, containing the Canticle of the *Benedictiones,* which served as a transitional chant between the vigiliary Office and the Mass.

After the *Benedictiones* came the prayer: ""O God, who didst allay the flames of fire for the three children, mercifully grant that the flame of vice may not consume us thy servants." This was followed by the great Litany, with the ordination of the new deacons and Roman titular priests. The *chirotesia* being ended, the archdeacon invested them with the *oraria* or stoles taken from above the tomb of St Peter, as in the case of the episcopal *pallia.* After the Communion the Pope gave to each of the new priests one of the consecrated hosts, in order that he should place a particle of it in his own chalice every day for the space of a week, to signify that his sacrifice was, as it were, an extension and continuation of the sacrifice of the consecrating Pontiff. This rite is found also among Eastern Christians.

After the Mass the clergy and people of the respective urban titles welcomed the new titular priest, and led him in triumph to his own church. The Pope had already given to those newly ordained splendid presents in kind: balsan , grain, wine, oil, sacred vestments, and liturgical vessels.

Pages walked in front of the procession, carrying censers and candlesticks in order to illumine the darkness of the night in the narrow streets of Rome, which were decorated in honour of the occasion with garlands, laurel wreaths, and hangings, while the thronging crowds shouted " Long live N.N. *presbyterum sanctus Petrus elegit."*

The newly elected cleric rode forward on a white horse on which was spread the white woollen caparison, the special honorary distinction that marked all the Roman clergy. As at the consecration of a Pope, so, too, at the solemn procession on horseback of the new titular priests, the cantors sang the traditional *laudes* as they went along, and the festival ended with a grand banquet, spread in the halls attached to the titular church of the newly ordained priest.

This tradition of the ordination of the titular priests at Rome, and of their ride through the city to take possession of their churches during the Ember Days, left its traces for a long time in the customs of the Pontifical Court. For instance, until these later centuries, the creation of new cardinals coincided regularly with the fasts of the *Quattuor Tempora,* and they entered on their new office with a stately progress on horseback from the Porta del Popolo to the Vatican.

In the extract from the Epistle to the Hebrews which precedes the Gospel, St Paul describes the Jewish rite of the Feast of Expiation, when the High Priest entered once a year into the Holy of Holies to offer there the sacrificial blood. The Apostle points out the inefficacy and the unprofitableness of this rite from the mere fact of its being repeated year by year, whereas esus, the eternal High Priest of the New Covenant, has sanctified the Christian people by a single but perfect sacrifice, and has definitely opened to them the gates of the heavenly sanctuary.

Fifth Lesson from the Epistle of St Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews (ix, 2-12).

Brethren : There was a tabernacle made the first, wherein were the candlesticks and the table, and the setting forth of loaves, which is called the Holy. And after the second veil the tabernacle, which is called the Holy of Holies, having the gold censer, and the ark of the testament covered about on every part with gold, in which was a golden pot that had manna, and the rod of Aaron that had blossomed, and the tables of the Testament, and over it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the propitiatory; of which it is not needful to speak now particularly. Now these things being thus ordered, into the first tabernacle the priests indeed always entered accomplishing the offices of sacrifices. But

into the second the high priest alone, once a year, not without blood, which he offereth for his own and the people's ignorance ; the Holy Ghost signifying this, that the way into the Holies was not yet made manifest, whilst the former tabernacle was yet standing. Which is a parable of the time present, according to which gifts and sacrifices are offered, which cannot, as to the conscience, make him perfect that serveth only in meats and in drinks, and divers washings and justices of the flesh, laid on them until the time of correction. But Christ being come, a high priest of the good things to conic, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands—that is, not of this creation, neither by the blood of goats nor of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the Holies, having obtained eternal redemption.

Then follows the Tract, taken from Psalm cxvi, which was always sung in Rome after the completion of the ordinations : "O praise the Lord, all ye nations : and praise him together, all ye people. For his mercy is confirmed upon us: and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever."

The Gospel, with the parable of the barren fig-tree (Luke xiii, 6-17), is by no means inappropriate to the autumn season. It is a symbol of the Synagogue, and of those souls who, though endowed by God with many graces, yet are satisfied with mere vain exterior observances, which, like the leaves of the fig-tree, hide their sterility, for they are unproductive of any fruit of good works. The kingdom of God does not consist either in words or in ceremonies, but is essentially spiritual and interior.

St Gregory the Great preached to the people upon this Gospel in the Basilica of St Lawrence, or, according to some codices, in St Peter's itself on the occasion of the night vigil. This last particular is, however, improbable, since there is no allusion in the whole discourse to this very important circumstance. Not much reliance, therefore, can be placed upon it, especially as the ancient lists of the Gospels have been altered many times.

The Offertory is derived from the customary vigiliary psalm, the eighty-seventh, which was habitually sung at a solemn Roman *Pannuchis.* The soul lifts up its prayer to the Lord not only by day, but also by night, and this for various reasons. Besides the example which Jesus himself gave us, when, after the fatigues of his evangelizing ministry during the day, he used to go up towards evening into the hills, *et erat pernoctans in oratione Dei,* prayer in the night hours fills a real want of the soul. If the soul is glowing with love for God, it will not be content to let the long hours of the night be wasted without giving to the Lord the worship due to him of gratitude and perfect charity. It is

in this same spirit that Isaias speaks when he says: *Anima mea desideravit te in nocte.*

If, on the other hand, the soul is still treading the path to proficiency, and is, in addition, enveloped in the shadows of temptation—a spiritually dark night—assiduous prayer is still very necessary, for the Psalmist says, when describing such a state of the soul, *In die clamavi et nocte coram te.*

Lastly, if the soul feels itself crushed by the heavy burden of its sins, even in this case its safety lies in prayer, following the example of the penitent Psalmist, who sang: *Lavabo per singulas nodes ledum meum, lacrymis meis stratum meum rigabo.* It is for all these reasons that the Church, taught by Christ and his apostles, instituted night prayer as part of the divine Office, to the solemn and splendid celebration of which the monastic Orders especially devote themselves, according to that which is written: *Non exstinguetur in node lucerna ejus.*

The Secret is similar to that of the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas. In it we ask for two graces typified by the Holy Eucharist: firstly, the constant consecration of all our faculties to the service of God—this is the original meaning of the Latin word *devotio*—and, secondly, the completion of this consecration in heaven when God, by means of the beatific vision, will take full and lasting possession of the faithful soul, so fully confirmed in love, that God will then be *omnia in omnibus.*

The verse for the Communion is drawn from the passage of Leviticus, already given (xxiii, 41, 43): "In the seventh month shall you celebrate this feast, as I made the children of Israel to dwell in tabernacles, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."

This feast is a prelude to that one which we shall celebrate in the heavenly tabernacle when the troubled period of our present life, represented by the six months of the Jewish year, being past, God will bring us to the Sabbath of his rest. In this seventh month, already sanctified and blessed by the Lord from the beginning of the world, we shall raise a hymn of thanksgiving to Jehovah which will be the song of redemption, the song of those who have come in safety through the waves of the Red Sea, the song of the returning exiles.

In the Post-Communion we ask God that his grace, of which the Eucharist is the vital source, may be fully efficacious in us, so that the mystical union of the soul with him which is typified by this Sacrament may attain to its full perfection in heaven.

The Holy Eucharist indeed is at once a grace—the word "Eucharist" signifying the "good grace"—and a promise. It is a grace in that it renders us capable of union with the

divine nature, strengthening us for a life of holiness and perfection. It is also a promise because Jesus, as St John says, gives us *gratiam pro gratia,* and when in heaven he will remove from our faith the species of the Sacrament, he will give to our love all that which the heart, when on earth, was eager to acquire by virtue of the Holy Eucharist.

The Liturgy dwells so much to-day upon the Jewish Feasts of Expiation and of Tabernacles in order to teach us the necessity of penance, without which we cannot reach heaven. To be efficacious this penance must be united to the sufferings of Jesus, who, through his Passion, has sanctified and rendered meritorious all our sufferings. The Feast of Tabernacles should also inspire us with filial confidence in the divine Providence, which for forty years watched over the children of Israel when dwelling in their tents in the desert, feeding them every day with miraculous food, whilst during all these many years of wandering not even their garments wore out.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Tertia post natale Sancti Cypriani.

According to the Roman rite, this Sunday coming after the vigil at St Peter's should be styled *Dominica vacat.* In fact, to-day's Mass, with the Epistle to the Corinthians breaking into the series of Lessons from the Epistle to the Ephesians, at once reveals its later origin. Yet this interpolation is fairly ancient, since it is recorded by Paul the Deacon. The reason for it is obvious. Out of Rome, especially in the numerous monasteries, the night vigil on Ember Saturday either did not take place, or was celebrated with a rite absolutely different from the papal use. At Rome this vigil always concluded with the celebration of Mass, which represented the true Sunday sacrifice, but in places where this ancient Roman type of vigil was not customary the people could not be left on the Sunday without any Mass at all, so the *Dominica vacat* of the Roman Sacramentaries soon received outside Rome its own liturgical formulary.

The Introit, instead of being taken from the Psalms, is from Ecclesiasticus (xxxvi, 18), and begins a series of Antiphons for the Introit, altogether peculiar to these last Sundays after Pentecost. "Give peace, O Lord, to them that patiently wait for thee, that thy prophets may be found faithful: hear the prayers of thy servant, and of thy people Israel."

The prophets have promised us the help of God, but we must clearly grasp the spiritual meaning of their message,

and not give to it a material interpretation after the manner of the Jews and the ancient Millenarians. Therefore St Augustine used to say to his followers : " Do not expect that which the Gospel itself docs not promise you." Not even to his own Son nor to the apostles did God promise life and happiness in this world. It is vain, then, to expect unconditionally from God those material blessings which he gives only in so far as they advance the salvation of the soul. This salvation, through grace, is the true object of our hope, which must be firmly and immovably fixed on the goodness of God.

The Collect asks that this divine goodness may, through its grace, direct the motions of our free will, for only thus can our actions be pleasing to God, and merit an eternal reward. This is a thought which, when well pondered over, should establish us in humility. All the good which we do is the work of grace, it is a gift received from God. Si *autem accepisti,* writes St Paul, *quid gloriaris, quasi non acceperis?*

In the passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians (i, 4-8) the Apostle gives hearty thanks to God for the generous outpouring of his graces on the Church at Corinth, and explains that the true manner of accumulating spiritual riches is to unite all our words, our works, and our intentions to those of Jesus, in such a way that his life may be revealed, and, as it were, carried on in ours.

The Gradual, from Psalm exxi, which is sung also on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, is a repetition of the Antiphon of today's Introit, in which also peace is invoked. The Psalmist, after the afflictions of the Babylonian exile, at length rejoices at the unexpected announcement that he and his people will once more be able to cross the sacred threshold of the temple of Jehovah on Mount Sion. The wrath and the justice of God have dispersed Israel by the sword, by fire, war, and slavery ; but this divine vengeance is always accompanied by unspeakable mercies. God, therefore, himself restores the ruins of his citadel in Jerusalem, and the past years of famine are forgotten in the abundance of good things within the walls and towers of the capital of Jewish theocracy.

All this is, of course, to be glorified by a spiritual interpretation. The peace which is here described is the atmosphere of the heavenly Jerusalem, where God himself, our supreme Good, will fulfil all our desires and establish us in an imperturbable peace.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm ci, and prophesies the surpassing excellence of the New Covenant, to which all the Gentiles with their kings will adhere. It is of interest to see how important a place in the teaching of the Prophets is held by the internationalization of the Messianic kingdom, in

contrast to the narrow provincialism of the Judaizers of the first Christian era, which St Paul constantly encountered on his journeyings.

The Gospel, derived from St Matthew (ix, 1-8), describes the healing of the man who was sick of the palsy. Sin, being a debt contracted with divine justice, can only be remitted by God himself, hence the power to forgive sins granted by Jesus to the Church is a proof of his divinity. The last verse of to-day's Gospel Lesson, which relates that " the multitude seeing the miracle, feared and glorified God who had given such power to men," may be understood as a subjective judgement on the part of the people who had not yet grasped the divine nature of Christ.

The words, however, have a still deeper meaning. The divine nature in Jesus worked the miracles through his human nature, therefore Holy Writ here teaches us that his human nature was truly united hypostatically to the Word, from which it derives such great efficacy, and an infinite power of redemption. Further, the Gospel narrative of the remission of the sick man's sins has more than a mere historical value, for it is both symbolical and prophetic. This power of remitting sins had to be communicated *to wen*—that is, to the apostles and to their successors in the priesthood; consequently, the Holy Ghost widens the field of this evangelizing energy, and the crowd at once rejoices that men also have received from heaven such truly divine authority.

The Offertory is epitomized from Exodus xxiv, and tells of the solemn sacrifice with which Moses ratified the alliance between Jehovah and Israel in the blood of the victims. It is to be regretted, however, that in the Roman Missal this splendid Offertory is cut down to a single verse. In the ancient Antiphonaries this Antiphon rises to the grandeur of a true liturgical drama. The Law-giver, at the command of Jehovah, climbs the height of Sinai and, prostrate before the majesty of God, intercedes for the apostate people, imploring mercy for them. The Lord answers him: " I will do according to thy word." Then Moses, taking courage, begs the Lord to reveal to him his glory. " No one," replies Jehovah, "can see my glory and live; but stand upon this rock, and when my glory shall pass, I will set thee in a hole of the rock and protect thee with my right hand till I pass, lest my glory shall blind thee. When I shall have passed I will take away my hand and thou shalt see my back, but my face thou canst not see " (Exod. xxxiii, 13-23).

This narrative, clothed in the splendid melodies of the Gregorian Antiphonary, has a deep significance. The vision of the Godhead is not for those who are still wayfarers in this life, and probably, as the doctors of the Church hold, it has

never been granted to any living man, being the privilege of Christ alone. Our mortal nature is unsuited to such a condition, which in itself would imply the actual but inadmissible possession of the highest Good. Faith, however, here comes to our assistance, and acts as a veil before the face of God, in such a manner that the rays of his glory enlighten our path without too greatly dazzling us, and without taking away from us the merit of virtue, which presupposes the liberty of the human will.

The Secret reminds us first that the holy Sacrifice brings us into such close intercourse with God that whilst we offer him our gifts he, in his turn, bestows on us the gift of himself. This sublime state to which faith raises us demands a faithful agreement on our part; therefore we here supplicate the divine clemency that we may be enabled by our actions to show ourselves worthy of our dignity as children of God and partakers of his divine nature, of which the Blessed Sacrament is the token. The truth will then be made perfect and complete in us, when, after the pattern of the divine Word, we also shall express the goodness and the beauty of the Father.

The Communion is from Psalm xcv: "Bring up sacrifices and come into his courts: adore ye the Lord in his holy court." In the Old Covenant it was the people who brought gifts to God in his temple, in the New it is God who gives himself to his people.

In the Post-Communion, after having rendered thanks to God for the Sacrament which we have received, we beg him to make us ever more worthy of participating therein. This is well said, for a fervent Communion, according to the teaching of the saints, is the best preparation for the next, since the Blessed Sacrament is all the more profitable the better disposed we are to unite ourselves to Jesus. What more efficacious means can we then find to attain these happy dispositions than Holy Communion itself, in which Jesus shares with the faithful soul the treasures of his Passion and the ineffable love of his sacred heart?

God has his own wonderful design in the distribution of his graces, so we must never weary of praying to him in our necessities, nor of waiting patiently for the hour of his divine compassion. It is true that in the Holy Scriptures God has promised to answer the prayer of the humble, but a favour given at the wrong time would no longer be a favour; therefore, if sometimes the Lord withholds his help, it is only in order to make it the more acceptable, the more effective, the more helpful. This is the inner meaning hidden in the invocation of to-day's Introit, and in those other words of Isaias: *Qui crediderit non festinet.*

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Quarta post natale Sancti Cypriani. Station at SS Cosnias and Damian.

According to the ancient Roman lists, on the Sunday preceding the feast of the martyrs Cosmas and Damian, the station was held at their basilica on the Sacra Via; in the Würzburg Capitulary this station is indicated as coming after the second Sunday following the feast of St Cyprian. As a matter of fact, the feast was a movable one, and this perhaps explains why also the Mass of this Sunday beginning with the Introit : *Salus populi,* preserves a last memorial of this solemnity in honour of the two famous doctors, the *Thaumaturgi,* from whom the people of Rome during the Byzantine period hoped to obtain health and strength both of body and soul.

The discretion which the Church shows in her Liturgy is admirable, for it is as far removed from exaggerated spiritualism as fOm excessive condescension to the weaknesses of human nature. The body is an instrument necessary to the soul in order that it may be able to work out its own salvation, and from this point of view good health is one of the most desirable of God's gifts.

The Introit emanates perhaps from the *Itala,*[1] and was also that chosen for the Thursday after the Third Sunday in Lent at the other station at the Basilica of the martyred *Anargyri* on the Sacra Via. " I am the salvation of the people, saith the Lord." The necessities and helplessness of fallen humanity form such a depth of misery that it is only infinite mercy and infinite grace which does not disdain to restore it to its former dignity. It is useless, therefore, to put one's trust in the arm of man which must perish and turn to dust, whereas no one has ever called upon the Lord for help and been disappointed.

In the Collect we implore God to take away from us everything that may destroy the perfect harmony and balance which exists between our body and our soul. The order established by God to which the Church alludes to-day is the following : The body, when healthy and strong, must act obediently under the rule of the soul, which on its part is raised up on high by grace, to God—*Qui Spiritu Dei aguntur ii sunt filii Dei*—so that, by this disposition, the whole man is directed gently and without difficulty or hindrance towards God as his final end, or rather, as in the words of the Collect, " he pursues with a ready mind the things which are

[1] A fourth century Latin version of the New Testament.—Tr.

of God." Glorious and beautiful indeed is this liberty of the sons of God, for it is the result of order, harmony, and the due subjection of the creature to the Creator.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians (iv, 23-28) St Paul sets before us Christian sanctity under the symbol of a new garment, which we are to put on. This garment is Jesus Christ himself, with his divine qualities and feelings. All the faithful being members of one and the same mystical body, there follow from this relationship reciprocal duties of charity, sincerity, trustfulness, and compassion.

The Gradual, which comes from Psalm cxl, is common also to the Tuesday and the Saturday after the First Sunday in Lent, as well as to the *Pannuchis* of the autumn Ember Days in September. In this present life our oblation to God is always an evening sacrifice, for it is enveloped in the twilight of faith, and the fleeting years of our pilgrimage are sorely troubled with tears. Thus Jacob, being questioned by Pharaoh, King of Egypt, concerning his age, replied that his years were *pauci et mali.* To this the Psalmist adds : *Ad vesperum demorabitur fletus et ad matutinum laetitia.* In Holy Scripture, contrary to our way of reckoning time, the day of the soul always begins in the evening, because before attaining to the morning joy of the beatific vision, it is fitting that we should endure with Christ the labour and the sorrow of the evening hours of the preceding *Parasceve.*

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from Psalm civ : " Give glory to the Lord, and call upon his name : declare his deeds among the Gentiles." The apostles, and after them the bishops and pastors of souls, have always looked upon this duty of preaching the Gospel as the most important of all, for by its instrumentality, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, innumerable souls arc daily brought to God and are born again to the supernatural life—*ex Deo nati sunt.* In order that this holy and spiritual generation may come about, it is necessary that the word of the preacher should be, not his own, but Christ's. Furthermore, the spirit which inspires it must not be the human spirit, which at most can form learned men, but the divine Spirit, which alone can form faithful Christians. Hence it was written of the holy apostles : *Repleti sunt omnes Spiritu Sancto et coeperunt loqui.*

The parable of the king who made a marriage feast for his son (Matt, xxii, 1-14) is omitted in the Würzburg Capitulary, which assigns instead for to-day the passage which is given in the Missal to the Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost. The allegory of the wedding feast was commentated on to the people by St Gregory the Great in the Basilica of St Clement; but we do not, however, know on what occasion,

for the Saint probably altered the ancient list of the Gospels.

The primary aim of the predestination of souls to the heavenly banquet is the supreme glorification of Christ as first-born of the human family and head of the Church. In truth, Jesus, risen from the dead and raised to the right hand of God the Father, transmits his life and holiness to the members of his mystical body in such a manner that, as he is the true image of the Father, so the Church may become the true image of himself. In this way, as the Apostle expresses it, God will be all in all, and this perfect unison will be the beatific hymn resounding throughout heaven for all eternity : *Amen, Alleluia.* " Friend, how earnest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" God calls our souls, but they must be in accord with their calling, so that the grace of eternal happiness may also be their due reward, the " crown of justice," as St Paul calls it, which God gives to the faithful servant, and to the soldier victorious in the fight.

The Offertory is taken from Psalm cxxxvii, and like the Introit is the same as that of the Lenten station at the Basilica of the *Anargyri* on the Sacra Via. " If I shall walk in the midst of tribulation, thou wilt quicken me, O Lord ; and thou wilt stretch forth thy hand against the wrath of my enemies; and thy right hand shall save me."

Man's time and man's way of providing are not those of God. As long as man continues to act, the Lord would seem to withhold his assistance, but when all human hope is vain, then it is that God most often begins his work of salvation and draws us unexpectedly out of danger. Frequently, therefore, it happens that the hour in which God hears our prayer is the darkest and saddest of our trial, as he himself says in the psalm : *Exaudivi te in abscondito tempestatis ; probavi te apud aquam contradictionis.*

In the Secret we pray that the holy oblation may not only bring glory to God, but may also be a pledge of eternal salvation to all those that share therein. The Holy Eucharist is in itself always such a pledge, since it contains the source of all grace. As, however, the subjective effect of the Sacraments is in relation to the personal dispositions of those who receive them, we here ask for such dispositions as may enable the mystical sacramental oblation to exert without hindrance its full power in our souls.

The Communion is derived from Psalm cxviii : " Thou hast commanded thy commandments to be kept most diligently : O that my ways may be directed to keep thy justification !" The Psalmist not only manifests his eager intentions, but, by the exclamation *utinam,* he signifies his joy and delight in the service of God. This delight is that which was felt by the

martyrs in the midst of their sufferings. The man who has little faith secs only the exterior and painful side of the Christian life, especially of the religious life: *Crucem videt, unctionem non videt,* as St Bernard would say. Whereas, the interior unction of the Holy Ghost renders the sorrows and hardships endured for God so acceptable that the Psalmist, feeling himself on fire, as he says, with love for the divine Word, sings aloud: *Ignitum eloquium tuum vehementer, et servus tuus dilexit illud.*

In the Post-Communion we make our petition that the healing grace of the Eucharist may mercifully deliver us from our perversity and make us ever to be devoted to the divine will. This is a beautiful thought, and suggests that our infirmity is caused by the poisoning of our nature through the fatal apple of Eden. The desires of every man are in accordance with his own spiritual nature. In order, therefore, that we, too, may have heavenly desires and may nourish divine ideals, it is necessary that the Holy Spirit should guide our spirit by his grace, or rather that he himself should take the place of our carnal and worldly spirit and teach us to live only by him.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Quinta post natale Sancti Cypriani.

The computation of the number of weeks between Pentecost and Advent has not always been the same, since at Rome the Sundays nearest to the feasts of the apostles and of St Lawrence were reckoned; then came those after St Cyprian, and lastly, in some versions, there followed a concluding scries of Sundays after the dedication of St Michael, *post Sanctum Angelum.* This explains why, as we have already observed, the Introits of these last Sundays form, as it were, a group by themselves, not being taken, as was the general rule, from the psalms but from the prophetic books.

The verses sung to-day at the solemn entrance of the celebrant are from the Prophet Daniel (iii, 31, 29, 30, and 35), but the actual words of the text are not quoted. Jehovah through Moses in the Canticle of Deuteronomy, and then by the mouth of successive prophets, had threatened the Jews with terrible chastisements should they break the covenant then entered into with him. Israel transgressed again and again, so God destroyed the national sanctuary, and allowed all the elders of the people to be carried away as slaves to Babylon.

Therefore Daniel says in the splendid prayer from which

the Introit is taken : "All that thou hast done to us, O Lord, thou hast done in true judgement, because we have sinned against thee, and we have not obeyed thy commandments." This is the sorrowful confession of guilt which leads back the sinner to the way of reconciliation. " We well deserve the lot which is reserved for us, yet do thou in thy mercy not regard our wickedness, but deal with us according to the multitude of thy mercy." Here we sec the hope which underlies the act of contrition, the detestation of the sin, and the implicit purpose of amendment for the future.

In the Collect we beg for mercy and peace from the Lord. Peace comes after mercy, for as long as grace has not blotted out the sin, the heart, torn by remorse, weakened by its own passions and at war with itself, cannot find peace. *Non est pax impio,* says the Prophet. The result of this twofold gift of mercy and peace—Jesus Christ as the author of our reconciliation with the Father is called by St Paul *Pax nostra*—is the renewal of the purity of our heart *(Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt),* which enables it to understand and enjoy the things of the Spirit, to which it had formerly been indifferent *(animalis homo non percipit ea quae Spiritus sunt),* and also a great ease and facility in the performing of good actions.

Oremus	Let us pray
Largire, quaesumus, Domine, fidelibus tuis indulgentiam placatus et pacem ; ut pariter ab omnibus mundentur offensis, et secura tibi mente deserviant. Per Dominum.	Mercifully grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, to thy faithful people pardon and peace, that they may both be cleansed from all transgressions and serve thee with a quiet mind. Through our Lord.

A passage follows from St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (v, 15-21). The season is already advanced, the vintage is now over, it is necessary to redeem the time which has been spent unprofitably to the soul, and instead of wasting it on feasting—this is the season of the drawing off of the new wine—we should prepare for evil days—that is, for old age and death by adding to our good works while yet we have time, through the grace of the Holy Ghost. The changing tints of the autumn leaves naturally lead the soul to meditate on eternal truths.

The Gradual is similar to that of the Thursday after the Third Sunday in Lent, and also to that of the feast of Corpus Christi. It is drawn from Psalm cxliv. " The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord ; and thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and fillest with blessing every living creature." This verse has a marked eucharistie significance. Holy Communion is the true universal bread

which God prepares for his children in every region of the earth, wherever, that is, a Christian altar is raised to him.

At the fitting moment God gives to man the food suitable to his need, for in the Old Law he nourished the faith of the elect by such means as the sacrifice of Melchisedech, the manna, the loaf of Elias, and other symbols of the Holy Eucharist. In the New Law reality takes the place of symbolism, but it is obscured by the veil of faith, in order that we may have all the merit of believing in the pure and single word of the Son of God. In heaven the blessed enjoy that same truth which sustains us here on earth; but they enjoy it without any veil, face to face, so that in the beatific vision, faith being no longer needed, charity alone may triumph, and the soul become immersed in the joy of its Lord.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm cvii: "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready: I will sing, and will give praise to thee, my glory." God is called the glory of the soul, not only as being the author of the glory, which will make the soul happy for all eternity, but also because he alone is the just judge of our merits. How great a glory is it, then, to be acknowledged and approved by God. Such was the thought which the Apostle expressed when, in writing to the Corinthians, he told them to count all human judgements as nothing. Jesus Christ, moreover, is the glory of the Father, since he is the mirror of his perfections. We, too, have our part in this glory according to the measure in which we enter into Christ, and, above all, in which we share in his passion. Therefore St Paul said: *Mihi absit gloriari, nisi in Cruce Domini mei Jesu Christi.*

The Gospel, derived from St John (iv, 46-53), treats of the healing of the ruler's son at Capharnaum, the account of which St Gregory the Great expounded to the people at the Basilica of the martyrs Nereus and Achilleus on the day of their feast in the catacombs on the Via Ardeatina. The ruler in the Gospel story had faith in Jesus, and so had recourse to him. The divine Master, however, desiring first of all to purify his faith from any material element and from all idea of self-interest, required of him that he should believe in his word without actually beholding the cure of the child. The father believed, and his faith obtained not only his son's bodily restoration to health, but also brought salvation to his entire household.

Thus the recipient of God's grace became an apostle of the Gospel. We all have received from the Lord so many graces, and now, especially, when the world is in such a deplorable state of ignorance concerning the things of God, every Catholic must become an apostle and imitate in this the early Christians, who, through such propaganda as this, which is especially that of the laity and by means also of

this tacit work of penetration, changed in less than three centuries the face of the world, and from being pagan made it Christian. It should be noted that in the Würzburg Capitulary this Gospel extract is omitted.

The Offertory, which, in the Gregorian Antiphonary, is accompanied by a melody full of feeling and inspiration, is from Psalm cxxxvi, and is also that of Thursday in Passion Week. " Upon the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept; when we remembered thee, O Sion." The waters of Babylon here represent the passions in which the unhappy sinner quenches his thirst, whilst the faithful disciple sits sadly beside that tainted stream.

Because of the corruption of our human nature, the just man is subject to temptation, but helped by divine grace he does not yield to it, and emerges victorious from the fight. Instead of giving himself up to unworthy delights, like the citizens of Babylon beside its flowing waters, the just man grieves and sorrows over the great trial to which he is exposed, but the thought of the joys of heaven makes him resolutely despise all the shameful pleasures of the senses. The great means of preventing a fall is the bearing constantly in mind that true and glorious home which is awaiting us on Mount Sion.

The Secret entreats of God the accustomed fruit of the Eucharist—that is, that the holy Sacrament may be to us a spiritual medicine and antidote, to protect us from the *virus* of sin which poisons our blood. Let us receive this teaching of the Church upon the effects of Holy Communion with great reverence; and may those who have the direction of souls especially avail themselves of it, for it is impossible to suggest any more efficacious means of stifling the fire of the passions in the hearts of the faithful than the frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist, the chosen bread and wine, which in the words of the Prophet is the food that nourishes virgin souls.

The Antiphon for the Communion is from Psalm cxviii, and is also that of Thursday in Passion Week : "Be thou mindful of thy word to thy servant, in which thou hast given me hope : this hath comforted me in my humiliation." When we are overcome by the devastating knowledge of our own insufficiency, let us offer to the eternal Father this Word, in whom he is well-pleased, and who is the cause of all our hope. Let us offer Jesus to him, in payment of all our debts; because this incarnate Word is a treasure which we now share with the eternal Father, so that in him we as well as he can find all our satisfaction.

The Post-Communion is like that of the Tuesday after the Second Sunday in Lent, and in it we implore God of his great mercy to give us grace to obey his commandments, so that

our habitual docility to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost may serve as a most helpful preparation for Holy Communion. The thought thus expressed is a profound one. The Sacraments work indeed by divine institution, but their effect is proportionate to the capacity and the disposition of him who receives them. What better disposition can a soul possess in order to receive the sacramental body of Christ than that of communicating constantly with the Spirit of Christ himself and of faithfully obeying his holy will?

A profound feeling of sadness pervades these Masses of the remaining Sundays after Pentecost, as though to prepare us for the coming of the Redeemer. Human nature in deep humiliation groans under the weight of its iniquities and of the divine chastisements. Man can no longer rise from this state, and has learned by experience that without the help of God he can do nothing good. We can only hasten by prayer and the humble confession of our own helplessness the hour of divine mercy. This is the meaning of the prayer of Daniel contained in to-day's Introit.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sexta post natale Sancti Cypriani.

A deep sense of sadness is felt to-day through all the chants of the Mass. This feeling, however, reaches its height in the Offertory, a beautiful Gregorian composition which in its primitive form was a true musical gem. The state of the soul which groans under the stern hand of divine justice is, indeed, wonderfully described in this passage of Holy Scripture, which the inspiration of Gregorian music has adorned with a most impressive melody.

Job is considered as being a figure of Christ crucified, for which reason in the first centuries of Christianity his book was read during Holy Week. A profound mystery is contained in those pages of Holy Writ; the patient sufferer of Idumea, covered with sores and lying on a dung-hill, asserts his innocence, whilst his pitiless accusers, arguing from the severity of his afflictions and from the equity of God's justice, try to prove that all this has come upon him as a punishment for his sins. According to the symbolical meaning of the prophecy both assertions are right, for Jesus was sanctity itself, yet the justice of God visited on him our sins, which he in his infinite mercy voluntarily took upon himself.

The Introit comes from the Book of Esther (xiii, 9-11). Mardochai, having learnt that at the instigation of Aman the entire Jewish people had been condemned to death, humbles

himself «and does penance together with Esther, calling upon God for help. What faith and resignation are in his prayer ! He docs not presume to question the judgements of God, who sometimes punishes our sins in this world in order to spare us in the next. If, however, God should have determined to spare Israel—this is his humble appeal to the divine mercy—there is none that can resist his will, and the very schemes of the oppressors of God's people will be made use of by Providence to increase the triumph of the true religion.

This last thought unfolds the secret of the whole philosophy of the Church's history. The evil that with God's permission is accomplished by the malice of the creature enters into the magnificent plan of divine Providence, which attains its most sublime ends precisely through the instrumentality of its bitterest enemies. Like the devil, who, despitefully winnowing the grain, renders a helpful service to the great Householder, so, too, do all evil men, for without wishing to do so and contrary to their own intentions, they serve God and prepare his triumph.

In the Collect we beseech God to protect his household from all harm. The spirit which inspires the ancient Liturgy is always eminently social ; the individual becomes effaced in the oneness of the Communion of the Church. Therefore we make our request for tw'o important graces : first, for protection against the wiles of the devil, who, in order to turn us from a righteous life, raises up material, moral, and spiritual obstacles, civil discords, epidemics, temptations; next, for that special spirit of devotion—*pictas,* which is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost—by which the mind is attracted and drawn towards the service of God and to the practice of good works.

In the extract from the Epistle to the Ephesians (vi, 10-17) is described the fierce strife in which the faithful are engaged against the devil, a strife all the more terrible because it is fought by spirit against spirit. In temptations, especially when the battlefield is the soul itself with its spiritual weapons, the most effectual defence against the devil is faith. For this reason God allows some of the saints to sustain this kind of internal combat with the enemy of the human race, in order that their faith may be still further purified and strengthened, that it may serve as an example to the faithful, and that a more tremendous defeat may be inflicted on the evil one. This is precisely the history of Job, which, under different names and in different circumstances, is repeated again and again throughout the history of the Church.

The Gradual is derived from Psalm Ixxxix. The early miracles worked by God during the first centuries of the kingdom of Israel or of the founding of the Church give us

the assurance that his help will never fail us even at the present time, for he is still the same God, faithful and unchanging, who existed before the creation. As his loving hand by an excess of condescension drew us out of nothing, so this same love preserves our being and bestows on us the most tender care of his Providence.

The alleluiatic verse is from Psalm cxiii, which was one of the psalms in use at the paschal feast, and which Jesus, therefore, also sang with his apostles at the Last Supper; but sung as it is in to-day's Gradual without the verses which follow, it seems incomplete: "When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbarous people". . .

We may remark that as far as purely civil culture is concerned, ancient Egypt was incomparably superior to the Jewish people. Holy Scripture terms the subjects of Pharaoh barbarians, because the civilization of a nation is not to be measured only by its material and artistic acquirements, but must be judged chiefly by the spiritual height to which its life and culture have attained. From this point of view, Jewish civilization, as we see it in the Bible, far surpasses all the most renowned civilizations of antiquity, and shows the supernatural origin of the Jewish religion.

The Gospel parable (Matt, xxviii, 23-35) °f ^ie servant who was so unforgiving towards his fellow debtor, which according to the Würzburg Capitulary should belong to the Fourth Sunday after St Cyprian, is the most authoritative commentary on those words of the Lord's Prayer: " Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." The measure of divine compassion is fixed by ourselves, and fully corresponds to that which we may have used towards our neighbours.

The Offertory is drawn, as we have said, from the first chapter of the Book of Job ; but lacking, as it does here, its primitive antiphonic hemistichs which are found in the Gregorian Antiphonary, it has become a mere narrative, losing to a very great extent that glowing dramatic character with which the early composer of the *Schola Romana* had clothed it.

Job, stretched upon the dung-hill, protests that he is innocent, and cries out that " his flesh is not of brass"[1] to be able to support such suffering. The magnificent musical composition ends with a passionate cry for that happiness which is the supreme desire of every heart. *Quoniam, quoniam, quoniam non revertetur oculus meus, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona, ut videam bona.* The human race strives with all its

[1] Job vi, 12.

power to express its insatiable thirst for happiness and well-being, but in order to find these, it is necessary to be raised up, higher than eye can see or ear hear, even to the contemplation of him who spoke of himself to Abraham as *omne bonum.*

The Secret asks God graciously to accept the oblations, the twofold spiritual effect of which is thus described. The eucharistie sacrifice, besides appeasing and satisfying divine justice on our behalf, restores us at the same time to that primitive state of salvation and health in which God created our first parents. This restoration by virtue of the blood of the New Testament is a gracious act of divine compassion, to which is here given the expressive attribute of *potens.* God truly *superexaltat misericordiam judicio,* for it has triumphed over divine justice itself, in accordance with that which is written : *Et misericordia ejus super omnia opera ejus.*

The Communion is taken from Psalm cxviii. The bark of Peter is almost overwhelmed by the fury of the storm ; but the Christian soul places all its trust in God and awaits, not indeed for the help of man, but for the " Salvation of the Lord," which the Psalmist calls *Salutare tuum.* It asks when will God judge its spiritual enemies?—but this judgement has already been pronounced, as is seen by the fact that the enemies of light and truth deprive themselves of these blessings according to the words of the Gospel : *Qui non credit, jam judicatus est.*

In the Post-Communion we speak of the Holy Eucharist as the food which nourishes us for all eternity, and we pray that sacramental Communion may result in binding more closely our mind, our heart, and our will to Jesus, who desires that we should live by his life.

Holy Scripture and in particular St Paul assign to St Michael, who gives his name to this series of Sundays—*post sanctum Angelum*—a foremost part in the warfare which the Church wages against the devil. The development of the mystery of iniquity, λνϊιιοϋι had already begun when the Apostle wrote to the Thessalonians *(2* Thcss. ii), is delayed by the powerful leader of the heavenly hosts, who will, however, finally and decisively triumph over Antichrist. The protection of St Michael over the whole Church should inspire us with complete confidence in his intercession, and a deep detestation of impious and secret societies which are the external weapons used by Satan in his warfare against God and his people.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Septima post natale Sancti Cypriani.

The tone of the Introit is sad, yet full of confidence in the Lord; the greater our misery, the more splendid will be the glory of the divine compassion in raising us from such a depth of abjectness; the more wretched we are, the more will the heart of God be moved to pity; hence the multitude of our sins, far from discouraging us, should rather fill us with a stronger and more loving trust in God's infinite goodness.

The Antiphon of the Introit is from Psalm cxxix: "If thou wilt mark iniquities, O Lord, Lord, who shall stand it? for with thee is merciful forgiveness, O God of Israel."

St Gregory the Great, commentating on Job, truly observes that a man may be presumptuous in regard to his own righteousness when, casting down his eyes, he keeps his attention fixed on himself and is absorbed in his own egoism. This is a condition of mind which leads to damnation. If, on the other hand, he lifts up his eyes to God and meditates on the divine holiness, on his sovereign rights over all creatures, and on the inscrutability of his judgements, then, by the light of the Holy Ghost, he will realize all the shame of his own deformity, so that the very things which once were matters of vainglory to him become subjects for anxiety and sorrow, and his good works themselves appear tainted by a thousand defects. This divine light which abases the soul and sets it on the solid foundation of humility is a grace much to be desired, for it is the fount whence springs the holy fear of God, which is the beginning of all wisdom.

In the Collect we call the Lord our refuge and our strength; our refuge, because in the hour of battle his sweet name, the heart of his incarnate Word, the holy Eucharist, are a sure protection for the soul that shelters therein; our strength, because by means of his sacraments and his grace he is the source of all those spiritual energies which are necessary to us in this life of combat and trial.

Thus, we ask God, as the author of our piety—piety in this sense, as we have already explained, is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost—to "hear the devout prayers of his Church." Here again we have prayer in its social and collective form. The prayers of the Christian community are called "devout," not only because they are inspired by that same *Spiritus pietatis* which is poured out upon it, but also because they have as their object the glory of God and the bonum *divinum,* in which our "piety" consists. The aim of these "devout" prayers, informed by the secret impulse of the Holy Spirit as being the Spirit of piety, is that God, who through the grace of the Paraclete, has deigned to

inspire us with that which we are to ask when we pray, may receive also these petitions, not as coming wholly from ourselves, but from the Holy Spirit who prays in us *gemitibus inenarrabilibus,* and may hear them favourably.

The reading of the Epistle to the Philippians is now begun, and will be continued next Sunday. In to-day's Lesson (i, 6-11) St Paul assures them of his love towards them, and declares that although he is detained in prison at Rome in defence of the Gospel, yet he bears them all in remembrance and wishes them also to partake of the joy that was then filling his soul. Of all the Apostle's letters this one to the Philippians shows most clearly his tenderness and affection, for he considered them as the best beloved of all his converts. In his other Epistles St Paul admonishes, teaches, and commands, but in this one he writes to his friends in perfect intimacy and expresses all the affection of his heart, which more than ever was full of joy because imprisonment and bonds were drawing him closer still to Christ.

The Gradual is drawn from Psalm cxxxii, and is a hymn of rejoicing in the Communion of Saints, consequent on the unity of the Church. The odour of grace and of sanctity together with rays of glory descend from our mystical head Jesus, and envelop all his members, like that symbolical unction which Aaron received on the day of his consecration as high priest, when the balm which was poured on his head ran down to his beard and his ephod, and even to the fringe of his sacred robe.

The alleluiatic verse is derived from Psalm cxiii. Who are they that put their trust, not in themselves, nor in the frail promises of men, but in the Lord? They are the wise, those who have seen the emptiness of created things and the supreme goodness of God. They are the souls who are penetrated by a deep sense of the sovereign transcendency of God ; this is the fear of God, which is a result of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the just. Such souls will certainly not be disappointed of their expectation, since the measure, according to which God gives himself to the soul, is that of its faith in him.

The Gospel (Matt, xxii, 15-21) describes the plot laid for our Lord concerning the payment of the tribute-money to the Emperor Tiberius. The treacherous intentions of the Pharisees and Herodians were undeserving of any reply from Jesus, but he, whilst avoiding in his divine wisdom the snare prepared by his enemies, combines both piety and prudence in his answer, and without falling into the ambush raises the political question to an entirely spiritual plane by laying down as a general maxim that we should certainly give to man that which belongs to him, but should first render to God that which is his alone.

By this he meant us to understand that there is not any divergence between the social duty of man towards his country and his religious duty towards God. Let us, then, give to our country the tribute, the work, and the obedience which rightly belong to it, but through all these social duties imposed by Jehovah and duly carried out in accordance with his will, let us remember that man belongs before all things to God, and that therefore his actions, his intentions, and the affections of his heart must all be directed to him.

The Offertory, like the Introit of the preceding Sunday, comes from the Book of Esther (xiv, 12, 13), but here it is probably out of its original position. The Church, before beginning the sacred action, takes the words of Queen Esther as its own and asks for the spirit of grace and of supplication, so that its prayer may be pleasing in the sight of the Prince. It is necessary in order that our prayers may be acceptable to God and favourably received by him that they should be inspired by divine grace, and that the heavenly Father should hear in them the ineffable groanings of the Paraclete, who makes supplication for us and becomes our Advocate in the name of Jesus Christ.

In the Secret we call upon the divine mercy to grant that the Sacred Oblation of the body and blood of Christ may cleanse us from the sins which we have committed and be to us a refuge from all dangers. This is a thought on which preachers and confessors might dwell with great advantage. Many persons indeed approach the sacrament of penance, but when they have received absolution think no more of the expiation of their sins, nor of the obligation which they are under to bring forth worthy fruits of penance. Many others again are frightened at the mere mention of the word "penance." Penance is hard indeed if one is alone to carry it out, but if it be performed in company with Jesus, who takes upon himself the heaviest part, it becomes easy and no longer burdensome.

Here the holy Sacrifice comes to our aid. Through it the merit of Christ's passion obtains for us, as the Council of Trent teaches, the pardon of even our greatest sins. It would therefore be of great benefit to the faithful if they were in the habit, as in the Middle Ages, of having Masses offered in satisfaction for their sins and of leaving legacies for Masses, etc., oh *remedium animae*.

Secreta

Da, misericors Deus, ut haec salutaris oblatio et a propriis nos reatibus indesinenter expediat, et ab omnibus tueatur adversis. Per Dominum.

Secret

tarant, O merciful God, that this healthful offering may ever cleanse us from our own faults, and keep us from all harm. Through our Lord.

The Communion is from Psalm xvi, and was formerly used on the Friday after the Third Sunday in Lent, before, that is, the passage from St John with the words of our Lord to the Samaritan woman was assigned to that day. "I have cried, for thou, O God, hast heard me: oh, incline thine ear unto me, and hear my words."

Humility has power to draw God to itself from the height of his glory even to the abyss of our nothingness. Ascetics have sometimes questioned whether the virtue of humility can exist in God. They answer, making a distinction. The virtue of humility belongs formally to the creature, in as far as it concerns the subjection due to the Creato-, but as also that ease and facility which we must have in approaching the lowly and helping them is a part of the virtue of humility—so in this sense humility shines with the greatest effulgence in God, who, in the Incarnation, came down from heaven to earth and hid his glory under the servile appearance of lowliness and poverty so as to give help to sinful humanity.

On the other hand, God, who does not disdain to incline his ear to the prayer of the sinner, and who, so to speak, has put his grace, his sacraments, the Holy Eucharist, at the disposal and service of men, does he not truly manifest, if not humility itself, which cannot exist formally in the sovereign Godhead, yet an immense love at least for this most precious virtue?

In the Post-Communion we call to mind the formal command of Jesus to repeat the oblation of the holy Sacrifice in memory of his passion. May, then, that which we have just now accomplished in obedience to his word not be imputed to us as presumption, but become the support of our weakness. Our Lord was not satisfied with immolating himself once for us upon the cross, he desired also to communicate to us the merits of that death without ceasing, and therefore has disposed that his bloody sacrifice should be perpetuated by means of the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass.

Postcomniunio

Sumpsimus, Domine, sacri dona mysterii, humiliter deprecantes: ut quae in tui commemorationem nos facere praecepisti, in nostrae proficiant infirmitatis auxilium. Qui vivis.

Post-Communion

We have received, O Lord, the gifts of thy sacred mysteries, humbly beseeching thee that what thou hast commanded us to do in remembrance of thee, may avail us for help in our weakness: Who livest.

God reveals himself to the simple and the pure of heart; whereas those who seek him for secondary motives are dazed by his glory, and are never admitted to an intimate knowledge of him.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Octava post Sanctum Cyprianum.

The Würzburg· Capitulary, which omits two Gospel lessons between the Third and the Sixth Sunday "*post Sanctum Cyprianum/'* reckons only six weeks after the feast of the Bishop of Carthage who was associated at Rome with the veneration that the faithful paid to Pope Cornelius (251-2). The list, therefore, is obviously defective and inexact.

At length we hear the divine answer to our humble supplications of last Sunday : " The Lord saith : I think thoughts of peace and not of affliction ; you shall call upon me and I will hear you;" indeed, I will send to you a redeemer, who will bring you back from captivity to the bosom of his holy Church. In this manner the sacred Liturgy prepares the minds of the faithful for the celebration of Advent ; so that the coming of the incarnate Word may find all hearts ready to receive his grace.

The Introit is derived from Jeremias, but with certain textual alterations (xxix, 11, 12, 14). The Lord, even when he punishes, does not forget his mercy, indeed he chastises because he loves, according to those words in the Apocalypse : *Ego quos amo, arguo et castigo.* Therefore, at the very moment when by the mouth of Jeremias, the Prophet of disasters and lamentations, God announced to the people of Israel the coming destruction of their kingdom and their exile in Babylon, he alleviated the severity of that chastisement by the promise of their future return to their own land and of the restoration of the kingdom of David.

The Collect implores pardon for the sins committed by the Christian community through human weakness. The prayer is universal, because it concerns the personal and general condition of the whole race of Adam. Humility, then, is necessary to all, and no one can assume a deceptive puritanical attitude like that of the haughty Pharisee. " Lord, if it is in the nature of man to sin and to be defiled by the mud of this world, let it also be in the nature of thy ineffable compassion to wash away in thy sacred blood the stains of his guilty conscience."

In to-day's Lesson from the Epistle to the Philippians (iii, 17-21 ; iv, 1-3) St Paul laments over the lot of those unhappy " enemies of the cross of Christ," who have made sensuality and gluttony their God, and whose end is eternal damnation. Christian life, on the other hand, has a wholly supernatural ideal, which through its union with, and participation in, the sufferings of Jesus, is a prelude to the day when the Lord

will raise up our mortal bodies and fill them with the glory of his transfigured humanity. The Apostle concludes his letter with special exhortations to concord and mutual charity, particularly among the deaconesses and the members of the ecclesiastical body at Philippi.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm xliii, and is well adapted to the celebration of the victories of the martyrs: "Thou hast delivered us, O Lord, from them that afflict us: and hast put them to shame that hate us. In God we will glory' all the day: and in thy name we will give praise for ever." Those that afflict the faithful are the devils and their allies here on earth—that is, the wicked. God has delivered the martyrs from the violence of their hatred and has covered their persecutors with shame. For when tyrants condemned those heroic confessors of the faith to the stake and the rack, their hatred did not rage so much against their mortal bodies as against their souls, which they desired to corrupt by sin.

In what way did God triumph in his martyrs? He abandoned the mutilated body to the tyrant and bore the soul of the victor in safety to heaven. The persecutor saw himself deprived all at once of his prey and felt the full disgrace of defeat. He had thought to conquer, but the martyr died rather than yield, and with the glory of his victory he often associated the witnesses of his combat, who, seeing the constancy of the Christian heroes in the midst of their sufferings, were themselves converted to the Faith. Thus the blood of the martyrs becomes fertile seed, bringing forth new Christians, whilst the efforts of the persecutor only increase the shame and disaster of his failure.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm cxxix: "Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord." O thou who are drawn to us the more powerfully, according as our misery is greater, do thou raise upon this very misery the magnificent trophy of thy mercies. Transform the good thief into a confessor of thy divinity; change the persecutor into an apostle, make of a libertine an Augustine, greatest of teachers, so that the deeper the abyss which separated all those from thy grace, the grander may be the triumph of thy mercy, which has been able to fill it with love, and to build on such a foundation as our human misery and thy divine greatness a lasting memorial of thy pity.

The Gospel from St Matthew (ix, 18-26), with the account of the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus and of the healing of the woman who was troubled with an issue of blood, gives a proof of the power of faith to which God has promised to grant all things. The faith of the sick woman is vigorous, but at the same time so humble that she, poor and forlorn, docs not even dare to speak to Jesus to ask him

to heal her. The faith of the ruler of the Synagogue, on the other hand, is also strong, but for various reasons it cannot be compared to that of the poor sick woman ; his rank, his riches, the music, the noise made by the relations and friends who were surrounding the bed, the scornful laughter of the sceptics, all these things were very unfavourable for the working of a miracle, so our Lord first of all sent away the crowd and then, being left alone with the parents of the child, he called her back to life. By this we see what obstacles the luxury and vanity of the world can put in the way of grace ; whereas the poor and the humble are ready at any time, even on the highway, like the sick woman, to receive the gifts of God.

The Offertory verse is the same as the allcluiatic verse. Also the gifts which we offer to God must be accompanied by the incense of humility. We bring to God *de suis donis ac datis,* and nothing really of our own. Besides, it is not God who has need of our gifts and of our worship, but we who in the depth of our misery have an immense need of him.

In the Secret we say to God that we offer up to him the sacrifice of praise—the perfect praise which the Incarnate Word alone can offer to the Father—in order to obtain the grace of being ever more and more devoted to the service of his altar. May he who has granted to his humble servants so powerful a means of obtaining grace at its very source, deign also to grant us that which he has already promised us. The expression in the prayer *pro nostrae servitutis augmento* is very significant. It points to an intensification of the spirit of our liturgical and sacerdotal vocation, for the *servitus* here stands for what the Greeks mean by λειτουργία?? that is, the *servitium sanctum,* the ministry of the altar.

The Communion is drawn from St Mark (xi, 24), but it must be out of its proper place. The Gregorian Antiphonary has the first verse of Psalm cxxix : " Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive and it shall be done unto vou."

St Augustine has explained very clearly the conditions necessary for obtaining that which we, as Christians, pray for. Or rather we may say that prayer always attains its primary end, since the supreme desire of our hearts is happiness, and God grants to us this true and complete happiness by placing each one of us in the circumstances in which we can most easily attain it. These circumstances vary according to our subjective dispositions, and this explains the different ways in which God treats different souls. Thus he leads one to heaven by means of wealth, another through

* Luke i, 23.

poverty; to one he gives vigorous health, another he paralyses with illness; each receives that which is most profitable to him for attaining eternal life.

The Post-Communion is of a general character. "We beseech thee, almighty God, that thou suffer us not to yield to human perils whom thou hast gladdened by giving us a share in things divine." We do not ask here that God should withdraw us from the battle—for that would mean the loss of virtue and merit, since St James declares that man to be blessed who sustains the trial—but we pray him by the merits of the holy Sacrifice so to strengthen us with his grace that the devil may have no part in us according as Christ himself said before his passion: *Venit princeps mundi hujus et in me non habet quidquam.*

How much easier it is to save one's soul in the midst of poverty and in a humble and obscure condition of life! Not that riches or worldly position are in themselves blameworthy; but very often to these advantages are joined certain dispositions of one's mind and one's surroundings which render the service of God very difficult to carry out. Such persons begin by excessive pre-occupation concerning their material possessions, and end by losing altogether the supernatural sense of Christian life and holy mortification, becoming at last *inimicos crucis Christi,* as St Paul sadly remarks.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

This is the last of the summer cycle, and is, as it were, a prelude to the holy season of Advent. The Collect, which in enigmatical phrase promises us the *remedia majora,* and the Gospel Lesson, describing the second coming of the Son of God, prepare our souls for the great event which is about to be celebrated. In five weeks more, the Word of God, clothed in human flesh, will make his first entrance into the world, and, as the Apostle says in the Epistle to the Colossians which is read to-day, God himself will then lead us definitely into the kingdom of love, founded by his beloved and only-begotten Son.

The Gregorian Antiphonary assigns only twenty-four Sundays to the period between Pentecost and Advent. As, however, the actual duration of this cycle depends on the date of Easter, and if because of a very early Septuagesima the Offices of some of the Sundays after the Epiphany have to be omitted, these Collects and Lessons are restored after the Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost. This is so arranged that both the antiphonic and the responsorial chants of this last Sunday of the autumn cycle are regularly

repeated on each of these supplementary Sunday synaxes. The Mass assigned to the Twenty-fourth Sunday keeps, however, its privilege of immediately preceding the Advent cycle, so that the extra Masses are inserted between the Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Sunday, which, therefore, has in the Missal the title of the last Sunday after Pentecost.

This somewhat uncertain and fluctuating character of the last synaxes of the two cycles after the Epiphany and before Advent existed even in ancient times. The recurrence of the same chants repeated on these Sundays recalls to some extent the poverty of the Greek and Milanese cycles. In the Greek rite, for instance, the book Οκτώηχο? contains the Offices of the liturgical cycle between the Octave of Pentecost and the so-called Sunday of the Pharisee and the Publican, the one, that is, which with us precedes Septuagesima Sunday. This series, however, consists of only eight Sundays, corresponding to the number of the Greek musical tones, which are repeated indefinitely during the greater part of the year.

The Ambrosian Liturgy has something of a similar nature, for the scries of the Sunday Masses presents only six types, which arc invariably repeated. The Roman Liturgy is far richer, since even this last group of Masses which closes the Pentecostal cycle, besides being venerable through its antiquity, is not in any way wanting in variety and beauty.

This Mass, which immediately precedes the liturgical period of Advent, has proper to itself only the three Collects and the scriptural Lessons. The first prayer anticipates Advent, the time of revival and renewal, for in it we pray that the Lord will stir up by his grace the torpor of our will, so that we may be disposed to receive from his loving-kindness those *remedia majora* which he is about to give us. What are these " greater remedies " ? The coming of Jesus, the Holy Sacraments, the Eucharist which repeats the Incarnation in perpetuity.

In order that these healing gifts may bring forth fruit in abundance, our co-operation is necessary, for, as St Augustine aptly says : *Qui creavit te sine te, non salvabit te sine te.* It is for this reason that the Church here invokes the divine grace, that the practice of Christian virtues may serve as a preparation and inducement to live again the life of Christ in the fulness of his sanctity.

This practice of Christian virtues is called in to-day's Liturgy *divini operis fructum;* but—so as to distinguish it from the dizzy rush of modern life, a life of feverish material activity, which very often disturbs the nervous system and, under the pretext of dominating the elements, tends to subject the spirit to matter and to the senses—this super-

natural activity is spoken of as being "divine action," because grace is its origin, and God is its end. Unlike the various activities of life, it is called *divini operis* in the singular, because one only thing is absolutely necessary, one only ideal must dominate all the other activities to which we apply ourselves—namely, that of which Jesus spoke to the inhabitants of Capharnaum when he said : *Hoc est opus Dei, ut credatis.*[1] God's greatest work, then, is a life of faith.

The Collect is as follows : " Stir up, O Lord, we beseech thee, the will of thy faithful ; that they may more earnestly seek the fruit of divine grace "—this is the true *Opus divinum* —" and more abundantly receive the healing gifts of thy mercy. Through our Lord."

To-day begins the reading of the Epistle to the Colossians (i, 9-14), which originally was continued in the ferial Masses throughout this week. The various feasts of saints which afterwards took the place of the ferial *missae cotidianae,* broke up this primitive order of the Lessons. The Lessons of the morning Office, which enable us, broadly speaking, to go through the entire Scriptures during the course of the year, make up for this to a certain extent.

In to-day's Lesson St Paul describes the inexhaustible riches of the Christian ideal, the knowledge of the ways of God, the fruitfulness in good works, the communion of saints in the kingdom of light, and the remission of sins through the blood of the Redeemer. He dwells insistently on the idea that Christianity is life, and, as such, needs development, boldness, energy, so that each member of the Church may, by the influence of divine grace, make daily progress in realizing the life of Christ in all its completeness.

The second coming of the Son of God on earth is prefigured by the first ; therefore, now at the end of the liturgical year, and before beginning the new cycle of Advent, the Church describes in the Saviour's own words (Matt, xxiv, 15-35) great cataclysm which will put an end to the world and precede the universal judgement. Jerusalem was the centre and symbol of the world ; whence, in one sole prophetic vision, two distinct prophecies are united in to-day's Gospel ; the one concerning the siege and destruction of the Holy City by the Romans, the other relative to the end of the world. The fulfilment of the first is a pledge and sure guarantee to us that the second, too, will duly take place when the time comes.

In the Collect before the Anaphora we entreat the divine clemency to receive the prayers and offerings which the people have entrusted to the priest so that each one to the

[1] John vi, 29.

best of his ability may contribute to the collective Sunday oblation, which, in early days, was thus offered for the whole community of the faithful. By the merits of the holy Sacrifice we ask of God that his grace may draw our hearts to himself, so that being freed from earthly desires our love may turn to him alone.

The affections come from the very nature of a man, and show what he really is. The sensual man will be full of carnal thoughts, whilst he who, like St Paul, lives in Christ will care only for spiritual things. In order, then, that our actions and our ideals may be pleasing to God, it is essential that the grace of the Holy Ghost should not meet with any obstacle or resistance in us which would hinder our being formed in the likeness of Christ, whilst, in the words of the Apostle: *si consurrexistis cum Christo, quae sursum sunt quaerite, quae sursum sunt sapite, non quae super terram.*

In the eucharistie prayer of Thanksgiving we invoke the healing power of the Sacrament, that it may restore whatsoever is defective or decayed in our souls. We can clearly see, from this prayer, how contrary the teaching of the early Church was to the Jansenist rigourism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which, by excluding the greater part of the Christian world from Holy Communion, made of the Eucharist instituted by God for the poor and the weak—*parasti in dulcedine tua pauperi, Deus*—a sacrament to be received at most once a year by those who were deemed perfect.

There are some kinds of evil spirits with whom it is too dangerous to engage directly in a hand-to-hand fight, and these are more especially the spirit of incontinence, of scandal, and of apostasy from the faith. The best means of obtaining the victory over these temptations is always to flee the occasions which lead to them. When, therefore, the soul perceives this "abomination" it must, following the advice given in the Gospel, flee for safety to the mountains—that is to say, it must seek the high places of faith and of holiness, taking refuge in the wounded heart of Jesus.

EUCHOLOGICAL APPENDIX

ANCIENT LITURGICAL PRAYER AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE DAY

Oralio Malutinalis

Postulemus a Domino misericordias ejus atque miserationes; hoc matutinum et hunc diem cunctuinquc peregrinationis nostrae tempus pacatum ac peccato vacuum ; angelum paci praepositum ; finem vitae Christianum; Deum propitium et clementem. Nos ipsos et mutuo, viventi Deo commendemus, per Unigenitum ejus.

Morning Prayer

Let us ask of the Lord mercy and compassion, that this morning, this day, and the whole time of our pilgrimage may pass in peace and be free from sin. Let us pray for the protection of the Angel of peace, for a Christian end, and that God may be benevolent and favourably disposed towards us. Let us commend ourselves and each other to the living God through his only-begotten Son.

Gratiarum actio Matutina

Spirituum ac omnis carnis Deus, incomparabilis ac nullius rei indignus ; qui dedisti solem ut praeesset diei, lunam vero et stellas ut praeessent nocti. Ipse et nunc respice super nos oculis benevolis, ac suscipe matutinas nostras gratiarum actiones, et miserere nostri.

Non enim expandimus manus nostras ad deum alienum ; siquidem non est in nobis deus recens, sed tu, aeternus ac immortalis. Qui nobis per Christum praebuisti ut essemus ; quippe per eumdem donasti ut bene essemus. Ipse nos per eum dignare aeterna vita, cum quo tibi gloria, honor, veneratio, et Sancto Spiritui in saecula. Anien.

Morning Act o] Thanksgiving

O God of spirits and of men, transcending all and having need of none; thou who hast created the sun that it may rule the day, the moon and the stars that they may enlighten the night, look upon us now with favour, accept our morning hymn of thanksgiving and have mercy on us. For we have never lifted up our hands in prayer to a strange God, nor have we worshipped any new God but thee alone, O Eternal and Immortal One. Thou who through thy Christ hast called us into being, hast granted through him that our life may be blessed. Give us also, we beseech thee, eternal life, by his merits to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all glory, honour, and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

Benedictio Matutina Efiscofalis

Diaconus: Inclinate ad manus impositionem.

Efiscofal Morning Blessing

Deacon: Bow' your heads for the Imposition of the Bishop's hands.

Ac Efiscofus oret his verbis

Deus fidelis et verax, qui facis misericordiam in millia et dena millia diligentibus te; amicus humilium et pauperum defensor ; quo universa opus habent, quia cuncta tibi serva sunt ; respice in populum tuum hunc, in hos qui inclinarunt tibi capita sua ; et

Efiscofal Prayer

O God, faithful and true, whose mercies are a thousandfold to them that love thee ; friend of the humble and defender of the r» thou of whom the whole world hath need, for all things serve thee ; look down upon this thy people who bow their heads before

benedic iis benedictione spirituali ; custodi eos ut pupillam oculi ; conserva eos in pietate ac justitia, et eos vita aeterna dignare in Christo Jesu, dilecto filio tuo, cum quo tibi gloria, honor atque cultus et Sancto Spiritui, nunc et semper et in saecula saeculorum. Arnen.

Diaconus: Exite in pace.

thee ; bless them with a spiritual blessing, and guard them as the apple of thme eye. Keep them in righteousness and devotion, and make them worthy of eternal life in Christ Jesus thy beloved Son, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all glory, honour, and praise now and for ever. Amen.

Deacon: Go in peace.[1]

Oratio Lucernaris

Serva et suscita nos, Deus, per Christum tuum. Suscitati postulemus misericordias Domini atque miserationes ejus angelum paci praepositum ; bonaetconducibilia ; finem vitae Christianum. Vesperam noctemque pacatam ac peccato vacuam ; cunctumque vitae nostrae tempus irreprehensum postulemus. Nos ipsos atque invicem viventi Deo, per Christum ejus commendemus.

Invitation to Prayer when the Evening Lamp is Lighted

Preserve us, O God, and raise us up through thy Christ. Being lifted up we implore the mercy of the Lord and his favours, that the angel of peace may watch over us, and that all which is good and helpful of which we have need may be given to us together with a Christian end. We pray that the evening and the night may be peaceful and free from sin, and that the whole course of our life may be blameless. Let us commend ourselves and each other to the living God through his Christ.

Episcopus orans dicat

Deus, principii expers ac fine carens, omnium per Christum opifex et rector, ante cuncta vero, illius Deus ac Pater, Spiritus Dominus, et eorum quae intelligi ac sentiri possunt, rex ; qui fecisti diem ad opera lucis; et noctem ad requiem infirmitatis nostrae, tuus enim est dies et tua est nox, tu aptasti lucem et solem ; ipse et nunc, Domine, hominum amator, ac optime, suscipe clementer hanc nostram gratiarum actionem vespertinam. Qui traduxisti nos per diei longitudinem et duxisti ad noctis initia.

Custodi nos per Christum tuum ; tranquillam praebe vesperam et noctem peccato liberam ; atque nos vita aeterna dignare per Christum tuum, per quem tibi gloria, honor ac veneratio in Sancto Spiritu in saecula. Amen.

Episcopal Prayer

O God, who art without beginning and without end, creator and governor of all things through thy Christ, whose God and Father thou art from before the ages : O thou from whom proceeds the Holy Spirit, ruler of all intellectual and corporeal creatures, who hast made the day for works that need its light, and the night in which to rest our weakness, thine is the day and thine the night, thou hast fashioned the light and the sun. Now, O Lord of all good, who hast such love towards men, mercifully receive this our evening act of thanksgiving, for that thou hast brought us through the long hours of the day and hast led us to the beginning of the night.

Protect us, therefore, by thy Christ, grant us a quiet evening and a night free from sin, and make us worthy of eternal life through thy Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be glory, honour and praise now and for ever. Amen.

[1] *Constit. Apost., P.G.* t. I, col. 1142 *sf.*

Benedictio Serotina Episcopalis

Diaconus: Inclinate ad manuum impositionem.

Episcopus: Deus Patrum ac Domine misericordiae, qui sapientia tua fabricatus es hominem, animal ratione praeditum, maxime ex his quae in terra sunt charurn Deo, et tribuisti ei ut imperaret rebus terrestribus; quique voluntate tua principes et sacerdotes constituisti; illos quidem ad vitae securitatem, hos vero ad legitimum cultum; ipse nunc etiam inflectere, Domine omnipotens, et ostende faciem tuam super populum tuum, eos qui cervicem cordis sui incurvarunt; et benedic iis per Christum, per quem illustrasti nos lumine cognitionis et revelasti nobis te ipsum, cum quo ab omni rationali et sancta natura debetur tibi adoratio condigna et Spiritui Paracleto in saecula. Arnen.

Episcopal Evening Blessing

Deacon: Bow your heads for the imposition of the Bishop's hands.

Bishop: O God of the Patriarchs and Lord of mercy, thou who in thy wisdom hast ordained that man should be endowed with the gift of reason and should be the most beloved by thee among all the creatures of the earth, and that he should rule over all the world, by thy will thou hast raised up princes and priests; the former for the security of life, the latter for the carrying out of the prescribed ceremonies of worship; bend down, O omnipotent Lord, and show thy face to thy people who now bow down their hearts before thee. Bless thy faithful through Christ by whom thou hast illumined us with the light of knowledge, and hast revealed thyself to us. Through the same Christ, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost the Comforter is due from every rational and angelic creature all w'orthy adoration now' and for evermore. Amen.[1]

THE TRUE CROSS

Crux benedicta nitet Dominus qua carne pependit
Atque cruore suo vulnera nostra lavat.

That blest Cross is displayed, where the Lord in the flesh was suspended,
And, by his blood, from their wounds cleansed and redeemed his elect.

Mitis amore pio, pro nobis victima factus
Traxit ab ore lupi qua sacer agnus oves.

Where for us men, through his love, become the victim of mercy,
He, the blest Lamb, his sheep saved from the fangs of the wolf.

Transfixis palmis ubi mundum e clade redemit
Atque suo clausit funere mortis iter.

Where by his palms transpierced he redeemed the world from its ruin,
And by his own dear death closed up the path of the grave.

Hic manus illa fuit clavis confixa cruentis,
Quae eripuit Paulum crimine, morte Petrum.

This was the hand that, transfixed by the nails, and the bleeding of old time.
Paul from the depth of his crime ransomed, and Peter from death.

[1] *Constit. Apost., P.G.* t. I, col.

Fertilitate potens, o dulce et nobile lignum,
Quando tuis ramis tam nova poma geris !

Strong in thy fertile array, O tree of sweetness and glory,
Bearing such new-found fruit 'midst the green wreaths of thy boughs,

Cuius odore novo defuncta cadavera surgunt,
Et redeunt vitae qui caruere die.

Thou by the savour of life the dead trom their slumbers restorest,
Rendering sight to the eyes that have been closed to the day.

Nullum uret aestus sub frondibus arboris hujus,
Luna nec in noctem, sol neque meridie.

Heat is there none that can burn beneath thy shadowy covert,
Nor can the sun in the noon strike, nor the moon in the night.

Tu plantata micas, secus est ubi cursus aquarum,
Spargis et ornatas flore recente comas.

Planted art thou beside the streams of the rivers of waters ;
Foliage and loveliest flowers scattering widely abroad.

Appensa est vitis inter tua brachia de qua
Dulcia sanguineo vina rubore fluunt.

Fast in thy arms is enfolded the Vine : from whom in its fulness
Floweth the blood-red juice, Wine that gives life to the soul.

Venantius Fortunatus. J. M. Neale.

THE DECORATING OF THE ALTAR OF THE LORD WITH FLOWERS BY QUEEN RADEGONDA AND ABBESS AGNES

Frigoris hiberni glacie constringitur orbis,
Totaque lux agri flore cadente perit.

The earth is still bound by the ice of the winter,
And all the beauty of the fields perishes with the fading flowers.

Tempore vernali, Dominus quo tartara vicit,
Surgit perfectis laetior herba comis.

But in the spring, when the Lord conquered death and hell,
More brilliant than before burst forth the new blossoms.

Inde viri postes et pulpita floribus ornant,
Hinc mulier roseo complet odore sinum.

Now do men adorn with flowers their door-posts and terraces
And the maiden bears on her breast the sweet-smelling rose.

At vos non nobis, sed Christo fertis odores,
Has quoque primbtias ad pia templa datis.

Yet it is not for yourselves but for Christ that ye bring this most fragrant of gifts,
And carry to his temple the scent-laden first-fruits of spring.

Texistis variis altaria festa coronis
Pingitur filis floribus ara novis.

All about the high altar have ye entwined the festival garlands,
And have woven around it a network of fresh gathered flowers.

Aureus ordo crocis violis, hinc blatteus exit,
Coccinus hinc rubicat, lacteus inde nivet;

Here stand forth in golden row gilly flowers of saffron hue, and there resplendent are rich blossoms of purple dye;
Here arc flowers brilliant in their scarlet dress ; there are others white as milk.

Stat prasino venetus, pugnant et flore colores,
Inque loco pacis herbida bella putes.

Sea-blue has its place beside dark green, and the varied flowers vie in shade of colour with each other,
As though they were rivals warring in this peaceful spot.

Haec candore placet, rutilo micat illa decore.
Suavius haec redolet, pulchrius illa rubet.

Here one pleases by its snowy whiteness, there another by its red-gold splendour,
This one has still sweeter perfume ; that one a beauteous fiery glow.

Sic specie varia florum sibi germina certant,
Ut color hinc gemmas, thura revincat odor.

Thus the many kinds of lovely blossom compete with one another
To surpass the bright colour of gems ; to exceed the sweet fragrance of incense.

Vos quoque quae struitis haec, Agnes cum Radegunde
Floribus aeternis vester anhelet odor.

May ye then, O Radegonda and Agnes, who weave these beautiful wreaths,
Be filled with deep longing for the scent and the colour of imperishable blooms.

Venantius Fortunatus.

PASSIO SALVATORIS

Trajectus per utrumque latus, laticem atque cruorem
Christus agit ; sanguis victoria, lympha lavacrum est.

From the transfixed side of Christ flow both blood and water ;
The blood is a symbol of victory, the water that of regeneration.

Tunc duo discordant crucibus hinc inde latrones
Contiguis : negat ille Deum, fert iste coronam.

The two thieves on their crosses at each side dispute with one another ;
The one denies God, the other wins the crown.

Prudentius.

VAS ELECTIONIS

Hic lupus ante rapax, vestitur vellere molli
Saulus qui fuerat, fit, adepto lumine, Paulus;

He who was once a fierce wolf has clothed himself in the soft wool of the Iamb.
He who once was Saul, bereft of light, has become Paul.

Mox recipit visum, fit Apostolus ac populorum
Doctor, et ore potens corvos mutare columbis.

Soon he regains his sight, and is now the Apostle and Doctor of the nations,
And by his powerful word changes ravens into doves.

Prudentius.

THE SACRED CHALICE

Clauditur hoc vase uostri pia victima phase,
Viva, salutaris, semel in cruce, semper in aris.

Quos recreas, Jesu, tam sacri Corporis esu,
A vitiis munda sacrati Sanguinis unda.
Hic editur Jesus, remanet tamen integer esus.

In this vessel is contained the righteous victim of our Pasch,
Once upon the cross, ever upon the altar, and a salutary living offering for us.
Cleanse, O Jesus, those whom thou dost feed with thy sacred Body,
From all their sins in the tide of thy sacred Blood.
Here is Jesus our food, who, though consumed, remains ever unchanged.

Can. Semel 51.

THE COMMUNION OF JESUS

Rex sedet in coena turba cinctus duodena,
Se tenet in manibus : se cibat ipse cibus.

The King sits at table surrounded by the Twelve;
In his hands he holds himself ; he receives himself as food.

Concord. Canon. Neg. Moyses, 87 *Dist.* 2 *De Cons.*

ANCIENT PRAYERS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Ad Deiparam Viginem

Omnis hymnus, quantumvis explicarecontendat,superatur multitudine miserationum tuarum, O Maria. Nam si offerimus tibi, O Rex sancte, hymnos arenarum numero aequales, nihil dignum perficimus his quae nobis donasti clamantibus :
Alleluia.

O celeberrima Mater, quae peperisti Verbum Divinum, omnium Sanctissimum, suscipe hanc oblationem, et libera omnes nos ab omni discrimine et futura damnatione, qui tibi canimus :
Allelulia.

Prayer to the Virgin Mother of God

O Mary, each hymn of ours, strive as we may to unfold it, is surpassed by the multitude of thy mercies. For if we should offer to thee, O holy King, as many hymns of praise as there are grains of sand on the sea shore, nothing that we could present to thee could equal the grace w'hich thou hast given to us who now sing to thee :
Alleluia.

O most renowned Mother, who didst bring forth the divine Word, the Holy of Holies, receive this offering and deliver us all from every misfortune and from future damnation, who now sing in thine honour :
Alleluia.

Ex Hymno Acathisto.

Precatio S Ephraem
ad Immaculatam V. Mariam

O pura et immaculata, eademque benedicta Virgo, magni Filii tui, universorum Domini mater inculpata, integra et sacrosanctissima, desperantium atque reorum spes, te collaudamus. Tibi, ut gratia plenissimae, benedicimus, quae Christum genuisti deum et hominem : omnes coram te nos prosternimus : omnes te invocamus, et auxilium tuum imploramus.

Prayer of St Efhrem
to the Immaculate Virgin Mary

We praise thee, O sinless, immaculate, and blessed Virgin, spotless Mother of thy great Son, the Lord of the Universe. O thou who art most holy and most pure, the refuge of the sinful, and the hope of the despairing, we extol thy name ! We bless thee, O full of grace, who didst bring forth Christ, God and man. We all prostrate ourselves before thee, we all invoke thee and implore thy help.

Eripe nos, O Virgo sancta atque intemerata, a quacumque ingruente necessitate, et a cunctis tentationibus diaboli. Nostra conciliatrix et advocata in hora mortis, atque judicii esto: nosque a futuro inextioiguibili igne, et a tenebris exterioribus libera ; et Filii tui nos gloria dignare, O Virgo et mater dulcissima ac clementissima. Tu siquidem unica spes nostra es securissima et sanctissima apud Deum, cui gloria et honor, decus atque imperium, in sempiterna saecula saeculorum. Arnen.

Save us, O holy and spotless Virgin, from all impending danger, and from every temptation of the devil. Be our protector and advocate in the hour of death and of judgement; deliver us from the fire that dieth not, and from the outer darkness ; make us worthy of the glory of thy Son, O most sweet and most merciful Virgin and Mother. Thou, indeed, art our only sure and sacred hope before God, to whom be glory and honour, dominion and power throughout all the ages. Amen.

THE DIVINE VICTIM UPON THE CROSS

De Passione Domini

In cruce suspenditur qui super aquas terram appendit ; spinea circumdatur corona rex Angelorum, falsa operitur purpura qui operit caelum nubibus ; alapam suscipit qui in Jordane Adam libertati restituit ; Sponsus Ecclesiae clavis confixus est; lancea punctus est Filius Virginis. Adoramus, Christe, passiones tuas, et gloriosam tu nobis ostende tuam resurrectionem.

The Passion of the Lord

He who raised the earth above the waters is raised upon the cross ; the King of angels is crowned with a crown of thorns; he who covers the sky with clouds is covered with mocking purple; He who in the Jordan gave back liberty to the sons of .Adam is given a blow upon the face; the Spouse of the Church is pierced with nails : the Son of the Virgin is struck by a lance. We adore thy passion, O Christ, do thou show unto us the glory of thy resurrection.

Crucifixus es propter me, ut velut ex fonte mihi effunderes remissionem; punctus es in Corde, ut mihi vitae scaturiginem aperires; clavis confixus es, ut ego in passionum tuarum profundo altitudinem tuae potentiae confessus

Thou wast crucified for me that thou mightest pour forth redemption upon me as from a fountain ; thy heart was pierced that the fount of life might be opened to me. Thou wast wounded by the nails, that in the depth of thy

ad Tc clamem : Vitae largitor, Christe, gloria Cruci et Passioni Tuae, Salvator.

Εκ : άκολουθί . των άγιων παθών

wounds I might acknowledge the greatness of thy power, and might raise my cry unto thee, saying : O Christ, O giver of life, glory be to thy cross and passion, O Saviour.

Ο · ΠΑΤΗΡ · ΤΩΝ · ΠΑΝΤΩΝ · ΟΥC · EnOIHCEC · Κ
ΠΑΡΕΛΑΒΗΟ · ΕΙΡΗΝΕΝ · ΖΟΗΝ · Κ · ΜΑΡΚΕΛΛΟΝ
COI AO^A EN^ (anchor).

(Ill sec. Cimit. Priscilla, in the crypt of the Acilii.)

(O Pater, universorum, quos creasti item et assumpsisti, Irenem, Zoen, et Marcellum. Tibi gloria in Christo.)

EVCHARIS · EST · MATER · PIVS · ET · PATER · EST · (MIHI . . .)

VOS · PRECOR · O · FRATRES · ORARE · HVC · QVANDO · VENITIS

ET · PRECIBVS · TOTIS · PATREM · NATVMQVE · ROGATIS

SIT · VESTRAE · MENTIS · AGAPES · CARAE · MEMINISSE

VT · DEVS · OMNIPOTENS · AGAPEN · IN · SAECVLA · SERVET

(III sec. in the cemetery of Priscilla.)

PART VI

THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS DURING THE CHRISTMAS CYCLE)

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TITYRE · TV - FIDO · RECVBANS · SVB · TEGMINE · CHRISTI

DIVINOS · APICES · SACRO · MODVLARIS · IN · ORE

NON · FALSAS · FABVLAS · STVDIO · MEDITARIS ı INANI

ILLIS · NAM · CAPITVR · FELICIS · GLORIA · VITAE

ISTIS · SVCCEDENT · POENAE · SINE · FINE · PERENNES

VNDE · CAVE · FRATER · VANIS · TE · SVBDERE · CVRIS

INFERNI · RAPIANT · MISERVM · NE · TARTARA · TAETRI

QVIN · POTIUS · SACRAS · ANIMO · SPIRARE · MEMENTO

SCRIPTVRAS · DAPIBVS · SATIANT · QVAE · PECTORA · CASTIS

TE · DOMINI · SALVVM · CONSERVET · GRATIA · SEMPER

F.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE "NATALITIA MARTYRUM" IN THE ANCIENT LITURGICAL TRADITION OF ROME

HE earliest origin of the liturgical *cultus* of the saints must be sought in the ancient funeral liturgy. The man who had believed in Christ, and who had, in his lifetime, confessed his faith by works worthy of a partaker in the redemption and of a son of God, passed, when the period of his probation was over, through the narrow gate of death to the eternal enjoyment of that light, peace, and life which formed the inheritance of the children of God. The triumph of Christ over death was also a pledge of the victory of all his followers over the ancient enemy. Those who during life had already claimed the title of sons of the resurrection did not in death give back their bodies to earth merely in order to return naked to the bosom of the universal mother, but rather to place therein the grain of wheat which only in this way could germinate and live again on a new stem.

In this attitude of mind, formed by the Gospel and by the teaching of St Paul on the resurrection and the *parousia,* the first generations of Christians regarded the eschatological problem with a tranquil mind—we might even say, with cheerfulness; and, long before St Francis, they surrounded our sister, " bodily death," with feelings of the deepest reverence.

In evidence of this we may note the care with which, even from the beginning, the Christians laid their dead to rest whenever possible in separate burying-places, distinct from those of the heathen. This same idea preserved the bodies of the faithful from the dread of cremation as well as from that of being heaped together in the pagan *puticoli.* The dead body of the Christian was to remain pure even in the funeral couch of the tomb, and it would have seemed to be a sin against the Holy Ghost to destroy or to dishonour his material temple—that is, the mortal frame of every baptized Christian.

Indeed, in that first golden age of faith, men did not talk

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about death : " He that believeth in me," Christ had said, " although he be dead shall live, and shall not die for ever." The passing, therefore, of the faithful from this world to the next was never called death, but merely the end of his trial ; he was *defunctus*—that is, one who had finished his period of service in the terrestial army.

It follows from this conception that the place where the bodies of the baptized await in peace the sound of the angel's resurrection trumpet could not possibly be regarded as the *domus aeternatis,* the sepulchre of the pagans consecrated to the *Dii Manes-* In the phraseology of the Christians it was simply called a *locus* or *loculus,* excavated in the labyrinth of the common *accubitorium* or, as the Greeks called it, *coemeterium,* the sleeping-place—that is, where the dead person *requiescit* (rests in peace), looking for the summons of Christ.

In the fourth century, St Jerome, describing the trial of St Paul the hermit, speaks of psalms and hymns *ex Christiana traditione,* which St Anthony is said to have sung on that occasion. Attractive though it may be, a reconstruction of this funeral liturgy, based on the indications which are found in the writings of the Fathers and in Christian epigraphs, does not come within the scope of this work. Leaving on one side, therefore, the Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians, in which he refers to the custom in force at Corinth, of conferring baptism *pro mortuis* on those who had died before they were able to receive it, we will confine ourselves to noting that, at least from the end of the first century, the eucharistie sacrifice was connected with the burial of the dead, as being the true *sacrificium pro dormitione,* in suffrage—that is, for their souls.

There is an allusion to this in a passage of the letter from St Ignatius to the Romans, in which he expresses his desire that the news of his martyrdom may reach them at the moment in which the altar is prepared, so that all may sing in chorus a hymn of thanksgiving to God, who has deigned to take to himself in the West the Bishop of distant Syria. nXcov /Jioc *μη παράσχησθε* του *σπονδισθηναι θεω,* ὠ ert *θυσία· στηριον ἑτοιμον εστιν · ἵνα εν αγάπη χορύ γενόμενοι ϋσητε* τω Πατρι *εν Χριστίρ Ἰησοχ, ότι* τδν *επίσκοπον Συρία* ὁ θιό *κατηζίωσεν ενρεθηναι ει δνσιν* ἀττδ *ανατολή μεταπεμψάμενο .l* This altar which is prepared is the very one intended for the offering of the eucharistie sacrifice.

We find a very important passage regarding these early feasts of the martyrs in the Epistle from the Church of Smyrna relating to the martyrdom of St Polycarp, in which

l St Ignatius, *Ef. ad Rom.,* c. ii, *P.G.* V, col. 688.

the faithful express the hope that they may be able to celebrate the first anniversary of their bishop at his tomb. *Ενθα ὡ δυρατὺρ τ/ρϊμ crurayo/xiiÖc? «μαγαλλιάσΥϊ και χαρά, ττα ρί ϊι ν Κὺριο? ἰ'-ιτίλίΐρ την τοϊ μαρτυρίου αὐτού τγτίραν ycvcOkiov.*[1]

Tertullian, in his usual caustic style, makes mention of these anniversary Masses for the dead in his work De *exhortatione castitatis,* in which, in order to dissuade a widower from marrying again, he alludes to the embarrassing position in which the husband would find himself when, united in matrimony to a second wife, he has nevertheless to be present at the annual funeral service on behalf of the first. *Neque enim pristinam poteris odisse, cui etiam religiosiorem reservas affectionem, ut jam receptae apud Dominum, pro cujus spiritu postulas, pro qua oblationes annuas reddis. Stabis ergo ad Dominum cum tot uxoribus, quot in oratione commemoras? Et offeres pro duabus? Et commendabis illas duas per sacerdotem de monogamia ordinatum, aut etiam de virginitate sancitum, circumdatum virginibus ac univiris, et ascendet sacrificium tuum libera fronte?*[2]

St Cyprian, too, refers to this *sacrificium pro dormitione,* in connection with a certain Geminius Victor who, contrary to the prohibition of a previous council, had named in his will as guardian the presbyter Geminius Faustinus. The Bishop of Carthage, however, prescribes that the law be carried out, and the deceased deprived both of the honour of the Requiem Mass and also of that of being commemorated in the diptychs: *ne quis frater excedens, ad tutelam vel curam clericum nominaret, ac si quis hoc fecisset, non offerretur pro eo, nec sacrificium pro dormitione ejus celebraretur?*[3]

The chapter in the Confessions of St Augustine (Book IX, c. xii), which describes the funeral ceremonies of St Monica, is too beautiful and throws too much light on this subject for us to omit at least mentioning it here. The widow of Patricius died in a small villa near Ostia, where she was staying in order to recoup her strength before undertaking the crossing over to Africa with her family. As soon as the news of her death had been made known, a great number of Christians at once assembled in the house. The body was laid out on the bed in which she died by those accustomed to this office *de more quorum officium erat,* probably by aged widows, deaconesses, or other pious persons, who were in the habit of performing this work of mercy.

The funeral took place the following morning. According to a custom peculiar to Ostia, *sicut illic fieri solet,* during the

[1] *Efist. Eccl. Smyrn.,* c. xviii, *P.G.* V, col. 1044.
[2] Tert., *Liber de exhort, castitatis,* c. xi, *P.L.* II, col. 975.
[3] Cypriani, *Efist.,* LXVI, *P.L.* IV, col. 711.

Mass—the *sacrificium pretii nostri*—the dead body was first placed *juxta sepulcrum,* and then in the church itself. The sacred rite being ended, the body was lowered, *deponeretur,* into the tomb, whilst Augustine returned, full of grief, to the house. Towards evening the future Bishop of Hippo sought relief from his grief by going to the Terme to bathe, a custom which the Romans rarely omitted. The ninth Book of the Confessions ends by begging the readers to offer a prayer for the parents of Augustine: *Meminerint ad altare tuum Monicae famulae tuae, cum Patricio quondam ejus conjuge.*

It appears that originally the Requiem Masses on the anniversaries both of martyrs and of the rest of the faithful were in some places celebrated openly at their tombs. This custom was not, however, without its drawbacks, and on this account, according to the *Liber Pontificalis,* Pope Felix I in the third century *constituit supra sepulchra martyrum missas celebrarentur*—that is to say, he limited the practice to the tombs of martyrs only.

It is important to note, with regard to the history of the early veneration of martyrs, that we find in the first centuries the liturgical expression of this devotion chiefly in connection with their sepulchres. The liturgy of the martyrs seems to us, therefore, to be a special form of Requiem which took place almost exclusively at their tombs, and which had in common many rites and customs borrowed from the funeral observances of the period.

We here refer to the funeral banquets, to the scattering of perfumes, and the pouring of libations upon the tombs of ordinary persons as well as of martyrs, of which so many memorials are found in the Christian cemeteries of Rome and other parts of Italy. To this kind of memorial belong the hundreds of inscriptions *(graffiti),* which were discovered not very long ago in the ancient *basilica Apostolorum ad catacumbas* on the Via Appia, in which reference is often made to the fulfilment of the vow taken by those early Christians, to prepare a feast *(refrigerium)* in honour of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and in aid of the poor. In the cemetery of Priscilla, too, may be seen an inscription of the year 373 containing the phrase *ad calice benimus.*

. . . IDVS · FEBR
. . . CONS · GRATIANI · III · ET · EQVITI
FLORENTINVS · FORTVNATVS · ET
L1X · AD · CALICE · BENIMVS

St Augustine tells us that his mother, when in Africa, was in the habit of bringing *ad memorias sanctorum . . . pultes et panem et merum;* but, having been trained from child-

hood to the strictest moderation, she poured out a small glassful only of this wine and further diluted it with a large portion of warm water, in accordance with ancient custom. Monica also shared the contents of her basket with the poor, and when there were several of these holy sepulchres to be visited, it was still the same small glass which, having been filled at the first, was carried by her all around the cemetery.[1]

Another classical custom, which was afterwards introduced into the Christian liturgy, was that of scattering flowers on the tombs of departed relations and friends, as well as that of letting perfumed unguents fall drop by drop on the bodies, by means of holes pierced for that purpose in the lid of the sarcophagus. An example of this was found a few years ago in the *basilica Apostolorum* on the Via Appia, where it was noticed that a small metal tube or pipe had been fixed on the inside of the cover of the tomb through which the ointment dropped upon the body within. Prudentius mentions both these customs:

Nos tecta fovebimus ossa
Violis et fronde frequenti.
Titulumque et frigida saxa
Liquido spargemus ŏdore

Sometimes, however, these classical customs gave rise to abuses, so that the Church was compelled to interfere and resolutely forbid them. An important passage from the writings of Abbot Schnudi (who died after the year 451) thus describes the festivals as celebrated by his Egyptian compatriots: *Adire loca Martyrum ut ores, legas, psallas, sanctifices te et sumas Eucharistiam in timore Dei, bonum est. At concinere ibi, edere, bibere, ludere, magis adhuc fornicari, homicidia committere . . . iniquitas est. Sunt alii intus qui psallunt, legunt, et celebrant mysterium, dum foras alii totam viciniam resonare faciunt voce cornuum et tibiarum. Sanctuarium martyrum, domus Christi. Fecistis eam forum nundinarium, fecistis eam mercatum mellis et anulorum aliarumque rerum; fecistis locum ubi aestimetis vitulos vestros, ubi stabulent asini vestri et equi, ubi rapiatis res venum adlatas. Vix qui mei vendit, hominibus conductis qui pro eo pugnent, salvus evadit. . . . Multi sunt qui co veniunt ut polluant templum Dei ct faciant membra Christi membra meretricis. . . . Ne sinatis ut loca martyrum occasionem vobis praebeant ad carnem vestram corrumpendam in sepulchris adjacentibus et in aliis locis vicinis, neve in recessibus qui in eis sunt.*[3]

[1] *Conf.,* lib. VI, c. ii.
[2] Prud., *Cathem.,* x, *P.L.* LIX, coi. 888.
[3] Zoega, *Catalogus Cod. copticorum manuscr. qui in musaeo borgiano Velitris adservantur,* pp. 423-24.

The picture here drawn by Schnudi is somewhat highly coloured, and depicts the mentality of the rural population of Egypt; it does not, however, cause us any surprise, for all ages resemble each other, and, as the proverb says: "All the world's akin."

The Christian mind grasped from the first moment the expiatory value of blood shed in testifying to the Gospel, and placed the martyrs in an absolutely distinct category from that of the other saints. It was customary to pray that the faithful who died *cum signo fidei* might find peace and refreshment in the Lord, whereas, in the expressive words of St Ambrose, it would have been considered an offence towards the martyr had anyone offered up intercessory prayers for him.

Indeed the first generation of Christians called up the martyrs to be the advocates before the divine Judge of those who addressed their prayers to them, and to make good out of their own superabundant merits the inevitable deficiencies of weaker mortals.

Martyres Sancti—these are the words of a beautiful epigraph at Aquileia—*in mente avite Maria. Sancte Laurenti suscepta habeto animam ejus* is inscribed on a stone in the cemetery of Cyriaca. *Domina Basilla commendamus tibi Crescentinus et Micina filia nostra* is the cry of two sorrowful parents who composed an epitaph for the cemetery of Basilla, which is now preserved in the Lateran Museum. *Addetur et tibi Valentini gloria sancti;* this wish is addressed to a certain Felix, priest and doctor, who was buried on the Via Flaminia, in the cemetery of St Valentine.

The Leonine Sacramentary contains forms of prayer inspired by the same idea: *Oblationes nostras, Domine, quaesumus, propitiatus intende, quas et ad honorem sancti Martyris tui Laurentii nomini tuae majestatis offerimus, et pro requie famuli tui (Simplicity episcopi suppliciter immolamus.*

The martyrs, in spite of the sublimity of their merit, share the quiet of the grave with their less renowned brethren in the Faith, and rest in the same cemetery as the undistinguished faithful. Sometimes their *loculus* forms part of a whole system or arrangement of tombs hollowed out in the lithoid tufa of the cemetery passage used by the whole Christian community and, except for the title of "martyr" traced on the slab of epigraphs which closed the tomb, such resting-places in no way differ from those of others of the faithful.

As yet there had not been erected the magnificent basilicas of Constantine, in which Byzantine art, raising the saints to the lofty gilded vaults of the apses and triumphal arches,

was to place them at too great a distance from us poor dwarfs of a later period of Christianity.

In the catacombs, on the contrary, the Christians, whilst venerating the martyrs, bear in mind at the same time that only yesterday those heroes of the Faith were their own fellow-citizens, their neighbours, relatives, or friends. They treat them, therefore, with customary familiarity and call them in a friendly manner simply by their name without any other title :

ANTEPnC . EП—riONTIANOC . EIIICK . MP.—

Commando Basilla innocentia Gemelli. At the most they give them the title of *dominus* or lord : *Refrigeret tibi Dominus Ippolitus.—Locus Felicitatis quae deposita est natale domnes Theclae— . . . depositus in pace in natale domnes Sitiretis— . . . arcosolium in Callisti ad domnum Caiuni—ante domna Emerita.*

It was only in course of time that the martyrs came to receive the title of *beatus* in popular usage :— *. . . ad mesa beati Martyris Laurentii descendentibus in cripta parte dextra—Beati Martyres Felix et Fortunatus— ... et a Domino coronati sunt beati confessores comites Martyrorum* —and finally obtained the more expressive one of *sanctus:— Abundio Presbytero martyri Sancto dep. VII id. dec.— Januarius et Silana locum besomum emerunt at Sancta Felicitatem— . . . Sancte Laurenti suscepta habeto animam ejus.*

This appellation of *sanctus* had not then the specific meaning which it has since acquired in liturgical terminology· It was merely a title of honour and reverence, which was sometimes given even to living persons eminent for their virtue, or for their ecclesiastical office. Thus St Jerome assigns it without ceremony to the widow Marcella and others amongst his correspondents.

A votive inscription placed to commemorate the works executed in the Basilica of St Sebastian during the pontificate of Innocent I (402-17) is thus worded :

TEMPORIBVS · SANCTI
INNOCENTI · EPISCOPI
PROCLĬNVS · ET · VRSVS · PRAESBB
TITVLI · BYZANTI
SANCTO · MARTYRI
SEBASTIANO · EX · VOTO · FECERVNT

In another epigraph in the cemetery of Commodilla, a certain Maximus, a priest of the titular church of Sabina in.

who was present at the drawing up of the contract for the sale of the tomb, was distinguished by the title of *sanctus:*

CAIANVS · EMIT · CVM · VIVIT
SIBI · ET · VXORI ı SVAE · AB · ADEO
DATO · FOSSORE · SVB · PRESEN
TI · SANCTI · MAXIMI · PRESBITERI
.....P.

Although the bodies of the martyrs were laid to rest in the common cemetery amongst those of the ordinary faithful, yet the very title which the shedding of their blood for the Gospel had won for them λν35 such that it covered them with immense glory and caused their tombs to become the object of public devotion.

We can still trace in the catacombs the marks of popular veneration towards the martyrs, for it was this veneration which led the early Christians to pierce in every direction the walls next to the tombs of the more celebrated martyrs, in order that the bones of their own dear ones might lie in a *loculus* as close to that of the saint as was possible.

. . . *Sepulchrum intra limina Sanctorum . . . accepit, quod multi cupiunt et rari accipiunt:* we find this epigraph in the Borgia Museum at Velletri. In another inscription at Treves, the reason which led the faithful to desire for their dead this material proximity to the tombs of the martyrs is well expressed : . . . *Meruit sanctorum sociari sepulchris, quem nec tartarus furens, nec poena saeva nocebit.*

St Ambrose was influenced by the same thought when he had the sepulchre of his brother Satyrus placed next to that of the martyr Victor at Milan, in the hope that the precious blood of the heroic confessor of the Faith might possibly drop on the *finitimae exuviae,* and cleanse them from the least blemish of guilt.

These burial-places acquired by the faithful beside those of the martyrs are often mentioned in the Roman catacombs. The following are a few examples of this :

SERPENTIV
S · EMIT · LOCV
A · QUINTO · FOSSORE
AD · SANCTVM · CORNELIVM

The tomb of St Cornelius was in a sort of passage lighted by a small window, in that part of the Cemetery of St Callixtus belonging to Lucina.

JANVARIVS · ET · SILANA
LOCVM · BESOMVM
EMERVNT · AT · SANCTA · FELICITATEM

Januarius and Silana, husband and wife, bore the same names as those of two of the sons of St Felicitas. For this reason they prepared their tomb on the Via Salaria Nova near the sepulchre, where the glorious martyr rested with her youngest son Silanus.

Another inscription comes from the Via Labicana :

QVOR-SVN-NOMI
NAE · MASIMI
CATABATICV
I-SECVNDV
MARTYRE
DOMINV
CASTOLV · ISCALA

The tomb was thus on the lower or second story, near the stairway leading to the tomb of St Castalus.

The following inscription from the cemetery of Cyriaca on the Via Tiburtina calls to mind the *mensa* or altar erected on the tomb of St Lawrence.

FL IEVRIALVS · V · H · CONPA
RAVIT . LOCVM · SIVI · SE
VIVO · AD · MESA · BEATI
MARTVRIS · LAVRENTI · DE
SCENDENTIB · IN · CRIPTA · PAR
TE · DEXTRA · DE · FOSSORE
V .....CI · IPSIVS
DIE · III · KAL · MAIAS · FL · STILICO
NE · SECVNDO · CONSS

The sepulchre of Euryalus was placed, therefore, close to the *mensa* of St Lawrence, on the right as one descended from the primitive Basilica of Constantine to the crypt of the martyr.

FELICISSIMVS · ET · LEOPARDA · EMERVNT
BISOMVM · AT . CRESCENTIONEM · MARTYREM
INTROITV

The *bisomus* or tomb made to contain two persons is in the cemetery of Priscilla, before the entrance to the *cubiculum clarum* of the martyr Crescentionis, near which the body of Pope Marcellinus was also laid.

This great veneration in which the martyrs were held was the reason why, from earliest times, their anniversary was celebrated beside their respective tombs, not only by their own relations and friends, as in the case of other faithful departed, but by the entire Christian community, which

regarded the martyrs as elder brothers or first-born sons.—*Dies eorum quibus excedunt, adnotate,* wrote St Cyprian in regard to some Christians confined in prison and already condemned to death for the Faith.—*ut commemorationes eorum inter memorias martyrum celebrare possimus.*[1]

It is of importance here to note that the rite observed in these annual commemorations of the martyrs retained for many centuries its original funeral character. We must assert, against Protestant theories, that the *cultus* of the saints as it is taught at the present day by the Catholic Church is truly that of the earliest ecclesiastical tradition, and is confirmed in hundreds of places in the Roman catacombs themselves, where the martyrs are repeatedly invoked in aid of the living and in suffrage for the dead : pavle-ET· petre · pro · erate · rogate, writes a certain Eras on the wall of the *triclia* which was discovered some years ago on the Via Appia under the *basilica Apostolorum.*

Te suscipiant omnium ispirita Sanctorum is the wish addressed to a certain Paul in a fine sepulchral inscription now at Carsoli.[2]

Refrigeret tibi Deus et Christus et Domini nostri Adeodatus et Felix has been inscribed by an unknown hand on a tomb in the cemetery of Commodilla.

These devout and urgent prayers to the martyrs, of which we find so many on the monuments of the first three centuries, show us that—although some ancient funeral rites common to other obsequies, even to those of the pagans, entered into the liturgical *cultus* of these heroes of the faith—yet the idea which pervaded these primitive anniversaries of the martyrs in the catacombs was entirely distinct from that which found expression in the funeral honours paid to the rest of the faithful.

This is precisely the thought which was so beautifully expressed by the Church of Smyrna on the occasion of the martyrdom of St Polycarp : *In exultatione et gaudio congregatis, Dominus praebebit natalem martyrii ejus* (Polycarpi) *diem celebrare, tum in memoriam eorum qui certamina pertulerunt, tum ut posteri excitati sint et parati.*[3]

Some of the prayers for the departed in the Leonine Sacramentary may cause surprise ; for instance, that one in which intercession is made for the soul of Pope Sylvester I (3I4_37) and his life praised at the same time : *Deus, confitentium te portio defunctorum, preces nostras quas in famuli tui Sylvestri episcopi depositione deferimus, propitiatus assume; ut qui nomini tuo ministerium fidele*

[1] Cypriani, *Ep.,* XXVII, *P.L.* IV, coi. 377.
[2] The " Frigida Carseoli . . . terra" of Ovid.—Th.
[3] *Efist. Etcl. Smyrn.,* c. xviii, *P G.* V. col. 1043.

dependit., perpetua sanctorum tuorum societate laetetur. . . , The difficulty is more apparent than real. In the first place, this is not the case of a martyr, but of a confessor, whose *cultus* in the Church only developed at a later date, and as an afterthought, as it were, to that paid to the martyrs. Moreover, even if prayers are here offered to God for the soul of Pope Sylvester, it should be noticed that this collect of the Leonine Sacramentary was probably composed at the time of the Pope's death, and consequently before it was possible to pronounce a definite judgement on his merits and sanctity.

The Church very prudently exercises this same caution at the present day when she ordains that the faithful departed, whether martyrs or not, shall not receive the veneration due to them as *sancti* until their cause has been tried and the solemn *vindicatio* of the ecclesiastical authority has been pronounced. This authority, in fact, controlled the *cultus* paid to martyrs even in early times, and claimed the right to decide, in individual cases, whether the violent death suffered by a believer at the hands of the pagans was actually an instance of Christian martyrdom and truly represented the *testimonium* to be given by the shedding of his blood to the divine origin of the Gospel.

In the beginning of the history of the Donatist schism in Africa, we hear of a certain woman named Lucilia, who had shown a deadly enmity towards the archdeacon Cecilianus because he had rebuked her for having, before receiving Holy Communion, kissed the relics of a supposed martvr who had not as yet been approved by the Church of Carthage : *Quae ante spiritalem cibum et potum, os nescio cujus martyris, si tamen martyris, libare dicebatur: ct cum praeponeret calici salutari os nescio cujus hominis mortui, et si martyris, sed necdum vindicati, correpta, cum confusione discessit irata.*[1]

Some persons have thought that the fact that the title of " martyr " on the tombs of several Popes of the third century in the Roman catacombs appears to have been sometimes added at a later date is due to the delay caused by the inquiry which, of necessity, preceded their *vindicatio.* This hypothesis is not in itself improbable; but it docs not seem sufficient to explain why the said title of " martvr " was added by another hand to those epitaphs also of pontiffs who, immediately after their death, were recognized as undoubtedly true and legitimate martyrs of the Church—as, for instance, Popes Fabian and Pontianus. Considering the publicity of the martyrdom of those pontiffs, it was not thought necessary at the moment of their burial to add the word ‘‘martyr,"

[1] Optatus Milevit., *De schism. Donat.,* lib. I, c. xvi, *P.L.* XI, col. 916-17.

mmw ms b b KESHBI

the more so because at that time the Papal See was vacant. The title was probably inscribed during the pontificate of Sixtus III (432-40).

The hymn of Damasus, in honour of the martyr Nemesius, alludes to the *vindicatio* and the judicial inquiries which preceded it. His tomb — it says — had long remained abandoned and neglected on account of the doubts which had arisen regarding his martyrdom; until at length it became possible to discover the truth of his intrepid confession, which thus dispelled every objection.

Martyris haec Nemesi sedes -per saecula floret
Serior ornatu, nobilior merito;
Incultam pridem dubitatio longa reliquit,
Sed tenuit virtus adseruitque fidem.[1]

The tomb of this martyr Nemesius can probably be identified in the cemetery of Commodilla on the Via Ostiensis.

* * * * *

What were the liturgical rites in which the *cultus* of the martyrs found expression during these early days of the Church?

Before answering this question, it is as well to insist again upon the fact that their liturgical *cultus* had mostly a funereal and local character, since it was rendered in most instances at the grave of the hero. We say in most instances, because a fixed rule cannot be made, especially in the case of the more celebrated martyrs who, like the apostles, were universally considered as the glory of some particular church.

Thus St Cyprian, whilst he was in exile far away from Carthage, writes to his clergy requesting that the death in prison of the heroic confessors of the Faith should be notified to him: *dies quibus in carcerc beati fratres nostri ad immortalitatem gloriosae mortis exitu transeunt, et celebrentur hic a nobis oblationes et sacrificia ob commemorationem eorum, quae cito vobiscum, Domino protegente, celebrabimus.*[2] Here, if we conjecture rightly, St Cyprian refers to two distinet sacrifices—to that one which he will celebrate in his place of retirement, as soon as the news of the death of the Confessors shall have reached him, and to the other one which he will offer in due course together with his clergy, at the tomb itself of the victims, when, the persecution being ended, he shall be able to return to Carthage.

From the biography of the same saint, written by his deacon Pontius, we gather another fact which, in the third century, distinguished the anniversaries of the martyrs from

[1] M. Ihm, *Damasi Epigrammata,* n. 80, p. Si, Lipsiae iSnc.
[2] Cypriani, *Efist.,* XXXVII, *P.L.* IV, col. 337.

the usual funeral commemorations of the ordinary faithful. Just as the Sunday Mass was usually preceded by the night vigil, so, too, the feast-days of the martyrs sometimes included the *pannuchis* of the preceding night. In reference to this custom, Pontius, speaking of the crowd of persons who had spent the whole night preceding the execution of the saint in watching around the house where he was imprisoned, observes gracefully that the faithful were thus celebrating the holy vigil before the *natalis* of the martyr. *Concessit ei tunc divina bonitas, vere digno, ut Dei populus etiam in sacerdotis passione vigilaret.*[1]

The custom of holding these vigils in preparation for the feasts of the martyrs continued even after the Peace of Constantine; thus the liturgical documents of that time mention the popular *pannuchis* at Rome for the feasts of St Lawrence, the martyrs John and Paul, and the Princes of the Apostles Peter and Paul.

We have said that the early feasts of the martyrs were, generally speaking, of a local character inasmuch as the liturgical worship—that is to say, the *sacrificium ob commemorationem* and the funeral *agape*—was celebrated beside the tomb. In the absence of any sepulchre it seemed as though the foundation on which the celebration of any festive rite should rest were wanting, and this explains why in the first centuries each church included in its calendar only the feasts of its own martyrs, even to the exclusion of those belonging to neighbouring cities who were much more celebrated. We can further say that in any one city the liturgical commemoration of its martyrs was at first strictly limited to the particular cemetery in which the tomb was placed, so that both the Philocalian *Feriale* and the titles of the Leonine Sacramentary, in notifying the *Natalicia Martyrum* or the *depositiones episcoporum,* always add the name of the road or the cemetery where these anniversaries were actually celebrated. An interesting example of this occurs in the *Feriale* of Philocalus: under July 10: *Felicis et Philippi in Priscillae; et in Jordanorum, Martialis, Vitalis et Alexandri; et in Maximi, Silani (hunc Silanum martyrem Novati furati sunt); et in Praetextati, Januarii.*

The same indication exists in the Leonine Sacramentary[3] and in the other liturgical documents which are derived from it down to the *Capitula* of the Lessons of the Mass described in the oft-mentioned Würzburg Codex, where we find on the same date, July 10, the following: *Die X mensis Julii natalis VII fratrum, Appia, Salaria. . . . Prima missa ad*

[1] Ruinart, *Act. Mart.,* Ed. Galura, vol. ii, p. 39. n. 15. Vienne. 1802.

[2] *P.L.* LV, coi. 60 64.

Aquilonem, secunda ad sanctum Alexandrum ... ad sanctam Felicitatem.

Therefore on July 10 there were held at Rome four distinct eucharistie synaxes, of which three were on the Via Salaria Nova, and one on the Via Appia. The first Mass was at the northern extremity of the city, in the cemetery of Priscilla, where lay the bodies of Felix and Philip; the second in that of the Giordani, not far from the place where stood the tombs of the martyrs Alexander, Vitalis, and Martial; the third took place at the sepulchres of SS Felicitas and Silanus, on the same road, but in the cemetery of Maximus; whilst the fourth, at the tomb of Januarius, was celebrated at the second milestone on the Appian Way, in the cemetery of Pretextatus.

Each church must then have possessed, from the third century at least, that which Tertullian calls the *Fasti* of the Christians: *habes (Christiane) tuos fastos,* a list, that is, of the feast-days of their own martyrs, arranged in the manner of the pagan calendars of that time, on which were notified day by day the sacrificial ceremonies and the place where they were celebrated.

The following example is taken from a marble fragment preserved in the Museum of Inscriptions at the Abbey of St Paul.

B K I Oct - N
c F
d c
E c
F c
G C
Fidei in Capit. Tigill. Sororis
{ Jovi Fuig.
{ Junoni Q
{ In campo
A F

The extract from the letter of St Cyprian mentioned above, in which the holy Bishop orders that the dates of the death of the Confessors in the prisons of Carthage be noted in order that their anniversaries may be celebrated regularly each year together with those of the other martyrs—*dies eorum quibus excedunt adnotate, ut commemorationes eorum inter memorias Martyrum celebrare possimus*[1]—clearly presupposes the existence of an official list of these funeral commemorations. St Cyprian refers to this also in another letter, in which he reminds the clergy of the Masses celebrated by him on the occasion of the death and

1 Cypriani, *Efist.,* XXVII, *P.L.* IV, col. 377.

anniversary of the martyrs Celerina, Lawrence, and Egnatius. *Sacrificia pro eis semper, ut meministis, offerimus, quoties Martyrum passiones et dies anniversaria commemoratione celebramus.*l

We still possess two of these very ancient lists of the feasts of the martyrs, one belonging to Rome and one to Carthage. The first is usually known as the Philocalian *Feriale,* because it is contained in the calendar made in the fourth century by Furius Dionysius Philocalus, the amanuensis and loyal admirer of Pope Damasus. The list is a double one, for it contains both the *Natalitia Martyrum* and also the *depositiones episcoporum,* yet the two lists form but one document, since each one refers to and completes the other. The records extend from the pontificate of Lucius to that of Julius I—that is, from 255 to 354, but they must originally have come to an end with the year 336 at the latest, because the depositions of Pope Sylvester and his two immediate successors now appear to be additions to the primitive list.

It is difficult to say whether this double calendar is more important on account of the names which it contains or of those which it omits. With the exception of the feast of SS Peter and Paul, we note the entire absence of all the martyrs and Bishops of Rome of the first two centuries, comprising even the most celebrated, such as Clement, Telesphorus, Flavius Clement, the two Domitillas, Justin, etc. This omission is significant because it confirms the principle already pointed out, regarding the special funereal character of the liturgical *cultus* paid to the saints in the earliest centuries of Christianity. Now, as the burial-places of the Popes and martyrs of the first two centuries in the cemeteries of Rome are almost wholly unknown to us, so there is no funeral synaxis in their honour indicated in the *Feriale* of 354.

Characteristic also is the mention of the feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul on June 29: *Petri in Catacumbas et Pauli Ostense, Tusco et Basso Consulibus.* The reason of this reference to the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus in 258 is to be found in the Bernese *laterculus* of the Martyrology of St Jerome, which thus completes the mutilated notice of the Philocalian text : *Petri in Vaticano. Pauli vero in via Ostensi, utriusque in catacumbas, passi sub Nerone. Basso et Tusco consulibus.* Evidently the compiler of the *laterculus* did not understand the significance of *Tusco et Basso Consulibus,* which he had inserted immediately after the name of Nero with complete indifference to the consequent anachronism.

[1] Cypriani, *Efist.,* XXXIV, *P.L.* IV, col. 331.

Yet it is not difficult to unravel the twisted threads. All that is required is to complete the mutilated notice of the Roman *Feriale* by adding· the phrases derived from the Bernese *laterculus,* thus reconstructing the announcement of the threefold feast which Avas celebrated at Rome in the time of St Ambrose in honour of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul. —*Trinis celebratur viis—festa Sanctorum Martyrum.* Thus the complete reconstruction of the Philocalian notice runs as follows : *Petri in Vaticano, Pauli Ostense, utriusque in catacumbas Tusco et Basso Consulibus.* We find, in fact, in the cemetery *ad Catacumbas* the commemoration of St Paul constantly associated with—and even put before—that of St Peter.

There remains the difficulty concerning the consulship of M. Nummius Tuscus and Pomposius Bassus, who held the *fasces* in 258 under Valerian. As, however, we know that in 260 the Emperor Gallienus restored to the Christian community the cemeteries which his predecessor had confiscated, the notice of the cemetery *ad Catacumbas Tusco et Basso Consulibus* becomes quite clear. The bodies of the two Apostles must have rested temporarily in that spot during the confiscation of the Vatican and Ostian *campi,* on which were respectively erected the *Tropaia* or sepulchral trophies of the Princes of the Apostles.

The Philocalian *Feriale* omits all reference to the saints of the first two centuries, because in general their tombs in the Roman cemeteries were unknown, and therefore no sepulchral commemoration could be celebrated for them. De Rossi, in his Preface to the Martyrology of St Jerome, considers that this omission may be attributed to the fact that the Roman Church only began to institute liturgical rites in honour of her own martyrs at a later date—that is, towards the beginning of the third century. (/let. SS *Nov.* I, fol. [L].)

A trace of this innovation or rearrangement of the funeral liturgy at Rome might be found in that puzzling note of the biographer of Felix I (269-74), to which we have already referred : *Hic constituit supra sepulchra Martyrum missas celebrari.*[1] The Romans, therefore, of the fourth century still remembered that the rite of solemnly offering the eucharistie sacrifice in their cemeteries on the tombs of the martyrs was perhaps not primitive, but one that dated from the third century.

Even after the year 255 the Philocalian *Feriale* is extraordinarily incomplete. The feast of St Cecilia, for example, on September 16 is wanting; as are also those of Peter and Marcellinus, Felix and Adauctus, Soter, Castolus, Crescentio,

[1] *Lib. Ponti/., P.L.* CXXVIII, col. 1410.

Paneras, etc., who arc among the most celebrated martyrs of the later persecutions, whereas the list includes several martyrs who were buried at some distance from Rome, such as the group entered under August 8 at the seventh *castellum ballistarium* on the Tiber, at one side of the Via Ostiensis; the four martyrs of Albano, and even Ariston of Porto. How are these anomalies to be explained?

Here we may form two hypotheses; either the *laterculus* is mutilated and incomplete, being intended by the compiler merely as an almanac for the use of the Roman aristocracy, or we must hold that it has a certain official or officious character, like that attributed nowadays in Rome to the "Diario Romano." In this case, it would register—among all the *Natalitia Martyrum,* of which each extra-mural cemetery had to keep the particular list that concerned itself—only those which were then regarded as public and common to all the clergy of Rome, and at which the Papal Court would be present; those, in fact, to use an expression from the Philocalian *Feriale* itself, which *Romae celebrantur.* There remains a third hypothesis which does not, however, exclude the two former ones, but rather completes them.

The *Laterculus* of Philocalus represents the reorganization of public worship in Rome under Pope Melchiades (311-14) as soon as the Diocletian persecution was at an end. At that time some of the sepulchres of the martyrs in the cemeteries were still covered over, the galleries and principal burial-places having been purposely blocked with earth in order the better to protect the tombs during the later Imperial confiscations. De Rossi found unmistakable traces of these precautionary measures on the part of the Christians, especially in the great necropolis of St Callixtus on the Appian Way. Such measures were very probably adopted even outside the papal cemetery, since Pope Damasus, as an instance of this, spealcs of a hiding-place *ad Catacumbas* in which he had to search for the tomb of the martyr Eutvchius.

OSTENDIT · LATEBRA · INSONTIS · QVAE · MEMBRA · TENERET
QVAERITVR ▮ INVENTVS · COLITVR · FOVET · OMNIA · PRAESTAT[1]

The sepulchre of the martyrs Protus and Hyacinth must also have been in a similar condition, for the same pontiff in a hymn composed in their honour attests that the tomb in the cemetery of Hermes *extremo tumulus latuit . . . hunc Damasus monstrat.*[2]

It is probable, therefore, that not a few of the gaps in the *Feriale* of 354 are due to the circumstance that at that time

the tombs of several of the martyrs had either become inaccessible, or that the place which contained them was too confined, dark, and wanting in air to permit of holding there a crowded liturgical synaxis.

However, the *graffiti* and the inscriptions in the cemeteries supply the deficiencies of Philocalus, for they record many local *natalitia,* for which we might look in vain, whether in the Calendar of the amanuensis of Pope Damasus, or in the various Roman Sacramentaries which follow after it as links in a chain. We have here a few examples :

LOCVS · FELI
QVAE · DEPOSI
NATALE · DOM
CLAE
orante
CITATIS
TA · EST
NES-THE

This epigraph belongs to the cemetery of Commodilla, and records the *natalis* of St Thecla, but we do not know whether it refers to the titular saint of a small cemetery at the second milestone on the Via Ostiensis or to the celebrated disciple of the Apostle Paul, whose feast is kept on September 23. The popularity of the *Acta Pauli et Theclae* spread the devotion to St Thecla very widely in the early days of the Church, and at Rome her memory was associated in a special manner with that of the great Teacher of the Gentiles. Moreover, just as the people of Rome formerly buried the martyr Timothy of Antioch in the gardens of Teona, beside the tomb of the Apostle on the Via Ostiensis, because he bore the same name as St Paul's favourite disciple—*ut Paulo Apostolo, ut quondam Timotheus, adhaereret,* as the *Acta* state—so on the hillside which rises up at the bifurcation of the Via Ostiensis and the Via Laurentina, not far distant from the Basilica of St Paul, another unknown Roman martyr named Thecla was interred, that her vision also, like that of the other Thecla of Iconium, might always be directed towards the Apostle.

We have in the cemetery of Commodilla another proof of this delicate feeling of the early Christians, who sought to surround the tomb of St Paul with monuments, which should, in one way or another, recall his most famous disciples. In a painting discovered almost at the entrance of the little sepulchral Basilica of the martyrs Felix and Adauctus, we find, together with the local titular saints, a representation

of St Stephen, from the time of whose death dated the conversion of Saul; while on the pillar near the apse may be seen the Byzantine picture of Luke the physician, holding a wallet containing the surgical instruments belonging to his profession.

This portrait of St Luke is the only one to be found in the Roman cemeteries, and he was represented there entirely on account of its vicinity to the tomb of his Master. St Stephen, too, who by his last prayer for his persecutors merited the grace of St Paul's conversion, forms one of the guard of honour to his former executioner, for a chapel was dedicated to him at the very threshold of the Ostian Basilica.

From the same cemetery of Commodilla comes another epigraph which makes mention of the *natalis* on October 21 of St Asterius of Ostia :

PASCASIVS · VIXIT
PLVS · MINVS · ANNVS · XX
FECIT · FATV · IIII . IDVS
OCTOBRIS · CII · ANTE
NATALE · DOMNI · AS
TERI · DEPOSITVS · IN
PACE

ω

The following inscription of the year 348, which calls to mind the feast of St Marcellus on January 16, is from the *basilica Apostolorum* on the Appian Way :

stvdentiae · D(epositae)
MARCELLI · DIE · N(atali)
CONS · SALLIES

The next inscription was found in the Trastevere, and refers to a group of martyrs whose feast was celebrated on September 16 in the *Coemiterium majus* on the Via Nomentana :

xvi. kal · octob · MARTYRORv(m in cimi)
TERV · MAIORE · VICTORIS · FELI(cis)
EMERENTIANETIS · ET · ALEXAN'(dri)

This group, however, must be completed with the help of the Martyrology of St Jerome, which, according to the Wissemburg Codex, gives for this day : *Romae natalis Victoris, Felicis, Alexandri, Papiae et in via numenta(na) ad capria, in Cimiterio Maiore natalis Emerentianetis.* To the name of Papia there must be added that of Maurus, or Maureleonis, his companion in martyrdom, who was buried with him.

This fact is proved by a votive tablet in marble, which was at one time near the Baths of Diocletian, at the place where these two soldier-martyrs mounted guard over the Christians who were there condemned to penal servitude :

SANCTIS · MARTYRIBVS
PAPRO · ET . MAVROLEONI
DOMNIS · VOTVM · REDD · *g*
CAMASIVS · QVI · ET · ASCLEPIVS · ET · VICTORIN(a)
NAT · H · DIE · IIIX · KAL ⸗ OCTOB
PVERI · QVI · VOT · H · VITALIS · MARANVS
ABVNDANTIVS-TELESEOR

The tablet has two faces, and on the back is repeated the inscription with slight variations· The date attributed to the *natalis* of the martyrs is :

NATAL · HAB · t> D · XIII · KAL · OCTOB

It should be pointed out that the careless engraver has blundered each time. The feast of the martyrs was on September 16 (XVI Kai. Oct.), and he, as the epigraph shows, knew so little of the science of numbers that he could not even transcribe them correctly.

The following is to be found in the Museum of Inscriptions at the Abbey of St Paul :

HIC · EST · POSITVS · BITALIS · PISTOR · MIA
SHIC · ES ⸗ RS · XII · QVI · BICSITAN
NVS · PL · MINVS · N · XLV · DEPO
SITVS · IN · PACE · NATALE · D
OMNES · SITIRETIS · TERT
1VM · IDVS · FEBR · CONSVLA
TVM · FL · VINCENTI · VVC
CONSS

Vitalis the baker, attached to Regio XII, was buried on February 11, 401, on the *natalis* of St Soteris, the martyr belonging to the Urani family, from which St Ambrose was descended. St Soteris was buried in the neighbouring necropolis of St Callixtus.

The following *graffito* is in the cemetery of Pontianus, on the Via Portuensis, near the *fenestella confessionis,* from which one could see the crypt of the martyrs Pollionis, Pigmenius, and Milix :

DIE · ΠΠ · NAT · SCI · MILIX · MART · ALDVS · SERVVS · DEI . . . .
PRESB . . . BEATA · ANIMA · IN . PACE

St Milix and St Vincent were buried beside the Persian martyrs Abdon and Scnnen. Near by reposed also the martyrs Pollionis, Candida, and Pigmenius. The *natalis* of Milix is given in the *Notitia Natalitiorum* of St Sylvester *in Capite* as occurring on April 25.

It is just possible sometimes to conjecture the veneration paid to some of the other martyrs of the Roman catacombs—of whom we can learn nothing either through the Martyrologies or other liturgical sources—from the religious salutations or the *graffiti* inscribed on the walls by former visitors when commending themselves to the intercession of the saints.

Of these we give some examples :

DOMINO -*ΕΓΛΑΛΙΟ* · PRESBYTERO · SANCTO · BOTVM · FECERVNT

This inscription was read by Stevenson on an *arcosolium* in the cemetery of Domitilla. The same name was traced in Greek on the door of the *cubiculum*.

ΕΥΑΑΑΙΟC ΕΑΥΤΩ

Unfortunately, we know nothing further of this priest Eulalius, who was revered as a saint, and to whom prayers were offered at his tomb in the cemetery of Domitilla.

The *natalis* of the martyrs Calocerus and Parthenius is assigned in the *Feriale* to May 19, but a *graffito* in their *cubiculum* in the necropolis of St Callixtus gives February 11 as the date which De Rossi supposes to have been that of the translation of their relics, when these were hidden in the district of St Soter on account of the confiscation of the necropolis during the last persecution.

III · ID · FEBRVA · PARTENIVS · MARTYR · CALOCERVS · MARTYR

This latter date is, in fact, confirmed not only by the Bernese *laterculus* of the Martyrology of St Jerome, but also by the *Notitia Nataliciorum* of St Sylvester, where we read as follows :

MENSE · FEBR. · DIE · XI · N · SCOR · CALOCERI · ET · PARTHENII

On the base of a column in the Basilica of St Paul is an inscription commemorating the dedication of the new church, which was rebuilt by Theodosius, and completed in 390 :

A £ ω Columna I'aul(o) a[(postolo) posita] natale X (IIII Kai, Decembres Cons) Valentin(iani) Auç. IIII et Neoteri v(iri c(larissimi) administrante Fl. Filipp(o viro clarissimo . . . Ae)milianas . . . t)rib. praetoria (no . . .

The mention of this *natalis* on November 18, the day on which the universal Church still celebrates the dedication of the basilicas of the two Princes of the Apostles, is important, because it shows that—independently of the Sacramentaries which make no allusion to it—it was the custom in Rome from the earliest times to celebrate certain solemnities of a purely local character, which, for this very reason, were never noted in the official documents that concerned the entire Roman community.

The same applies to the feast of St Peter's Chair, which, after being mentioned once in the Philocalian *Feriale* on February 22, *Natale Petri de Cathedra,* receives no further confirmation from the Roman liturgical documents until the eleventh century. During all those many years, however, the feast was preserved in the local tradition of the Vatican Basilica, whence it was brought to light again in the Calendar of the Papal Curia at the latter end of the Middle Ages.

A *graffito* at the entrance to the underground vault of St Cornelius, in the cemetery of St Callixtus, preserves the memory of the martyrs Cerealis and Sallustia with their twenty-one companions : cerealis · et · sallustia · cvm · XXi. This group is not mentioned at all in any liturgical documents.

There is in the cemetery of SS Peter and Marcellinus, on the Via Labicana, a valuable *graffito* which bears witness to the early veneration shown by the faithful to St Helena, the mother of the first Christian Emperor :

0 OEilC TH IIPECBHA
ΤΩΝ ΑΓΟΝ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗC
APHAC EAHNHC COCÛN
TOYC COY AOYAOYC
IOANNH.....

In this salutation it is interesting to notice that St Helena, who is buried in a mausoleum close by, is associated by her title of " saint " with the veneration paid to the local martyrs Peter and Marcellinus.

In the necropolis of Priscilla another *graffito* invokes the saint whose name the cemetery bears, giving her the titles of *domna* and *beata:*

cito · cvNCTi · svsciPiA(ntur) · vo(tis)
DOMNAE · PRISCILLAE · BE(a)TE ----
(de)LICTI · KAVSIS · AGI · VO . . . .
---- ATTINV6 · ET

The next calls upon the martyr Crescentionis :

SALVA · ME
DOMNE
CRESCENTIONE
Φ MEΛM · LVCEM

This martyr Crescentionis, whose *natalis* falls on November 25, was held in great veneration at Rome, so much so that Pope Marcellinus, according to the *Liber Pontificalis,* had his own tomb prepared close to that of the saint.

This epigraph from the cemetery of Priscilla records the popular devotion to St Crescentionis :

FELicissiMvs · et · LEOPAR(da emerunt)
BisoMVM ı at · cRiscENT(ionem martyrem)
INTROITV

The husband and wife purchased a tomb for two persons *(bisomus)* in the gallery which runs past the entrance to the *cubiculum* of the martyr Crescentionis.

We have a proof of this intense veneration paid to the martyrs at Rome, beside their first resting-place in the extra-mural cemeteries, even to those of whom no trace has remained in any liturgical documents, in the continuous care shown by the Popes in adorning and restoring their sanctuaries. It will suffice to cite the zealous activity displayed by Pope Adrian I (772-95), of whom we read in the Pontifical : *Coemeterium beatorum Petri et Marcellini via Labicana, juxta basilicam beatae Helenae renovavit, et tectum ejus, idest sancti Tiburtii et eorundem sanctorum Petri et Marcellini noviter fecit, et gradus ejus qui descendunt ad eorum sacratissima corpora noviter fecit, quoniam nullus erat jam descensus ad ipsa sancta corpora*[1] *. . . basilicam sanctae Eugeniae tam intus quamque foris a novo restauravit.*

Simili modo et basilicam sancti Gordiani atque Epimachi, seu coemeterium ejusdem Ecclesiae Simplicii atque Serviliani, atque Quarti et Quinti martyrum, et beatae Sophiae una cum coemeterio Sancti Tertulliani foris portam Latinam a novo renovavit, necnon et ecclesiam beati Tiburtii et Valeriani atque Maximi, seu basilicam Sancti Zenonis, una cum coemeterio Sanctorum Urbani Pontificis, Felicissimi et Agapiti, atque Januari et Cyrini martyrum foris portam Appiam . . . restauravit - - - et basilicam coemeterii sanctorum Martyrum Hermetis, Prothi et Hyacinthi atque basilicam . . . innovavit. Coemeterium vero sanctae

1 *Lib. Pont., P.L.* CXXVIII, coi. 1183 84.

Felicitatis, via Salaria, una cum ecclesiis sancti Silvani martyris et sancti Bonifacii confessoris atque pontificis . . . restauravit . . . Sed et basilicam sancti Saturnini, in praedicta via Salaria positam, una cum coemeterio sanctorum Chrysanli et Dariae renovavit, atque coemeterium sanctae Hilariae innovavit, immo et coemeterium Jordanorum, videlicet sanctorum Alexandri et Vitalis et Martialis Martyrum, seu sanctarum septem Virginum a novo restauravit. Pariter in eadem via Salaria coemeterium sancti Sylvestri . . . renovavit; necnon et ecclesiam sancti Felicis positam foris portam Portuensem a novo restauravit. Simulque et basilicam sanctorum Abdon et Sennem atque beatae Candidae una cum caeleris sanctorum coemeteriis in idipsum pariter renovavit.[1]

A most interesting example relating to the *cultus* of the Roman martyrs at the time of St Gregory the Great is preserved in the Cathedral of Monza. Here may still be seen the *ampullae* brought to Queen Theodelinda from Rome by Abbot John, containing the oils which, with the Pope's permission, he had taken from the lamps burning before the various tombs of the martyrs in the extra-mural cemeteries.

Besides the *pittacia* attached to each little phial, John drew up a list of these oils, and this document with its long roll of names, besides being of immense importance hagiographically, is also of great topographical value in determining the sites of the sepulchres of the martyrs, which are scattered about amongst the various extra-mural roads.

Here is an extract from the list : S *Sebastiani, set Eutycii, sci Quirini, sci Valeriani, sci Tiburti, sci Maximi, set Orbani, sci Januarii, scê Petronillae filiae sci Petri Apostoli, sci Nerei, sci Damasi, s. Marcelliani, sci Acilei, sci* ✠*Marci+fc Quas olea sancta temporibus Domni Gregorii Papae adduxit Johannis indignus et peccator Domnae Theodelindae Reginae de Roma.*

The excavations in the Roman catacombs have brought to light several of these *mensae oleorum* of white marble and of very generous dimensions, in which, as a rule, the wick floated in oil from Sabine olives, mixed with perfumed balsam. But even without these discoveries, we could, on the authority of the Monza evidence, have pictured to ourselves the galleries and the *cubicula* of the cemeteries between the fourth and the seventh centuries, lighted up not only by the *lucernari* communicating with the floor above ground, but also by the numerous votive lamps placed before the tombs of the saints.

When St Jerome of Bethlehem describes the subterranean cemeteries of Rome and likens them to the darkness of Orcus, he was doubtless giving rein to his fervid artistic

[1] *Op. cit.*, col. 1193-94.

imagination, and forgetting the exact impression he had received of them in his youth. His contemporary, Prudentius, speaks of them with greater enthusiasm :

Innumeros cineres Sanctorum Romula in Urbe
Vidimus, o Christi Valeriane sacer.
Incisos tumulis titulos et singula quaeris
Nomina ƒ Difficile est ut replicare queam.
Tantos justorum populos furor impius hausit,
Cum coleret patrios Troia Roma Deos.
Plurima litterulis signata sepulchra loquuntur.
Martyris aut nomen, aut epigramma aliquod.
Sunt et muta tamen tacitas claudentia tumbas,
Marmora quae solum significant numerum.
Quanta virum jaceant congestis corpora acervis
Nosse licet quarum nomina nulla legas?
Sexaginla illic defossas mole sub una
Reliquias memini me didicisse hominum :
Quorum solus habet comperta vocabula Christus.
(Peristephanon, Hym. XI, *P.L.* LX, coi. 530-33.)

The sixty martyrs here mentioned by Prudentius are those Christians who were buried alive by the pagans under a mass of sand and stones whilst celebrating on October 25 the *natalis* of the martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria in the cemetery of the Giordani. How great was the concourse of the faithful at the tombs of the martyrs between the fourth and the seventh centuries, especially on the day of their respective feasts, we find described by the same Spanish Christian poet in the same hymn in honour of St Hippolytus, from which are taken the verses quoted above.

He tells us first that it is a privilege accorded to the martyrs that their tomb is used also as an altar for the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Talibus Hippolyti corpus mandatur opertis
Propter ubi apposita est ara dicata Deo.
Illa Sacramenti donatrix mensa, eademque
Custos fida sui Martyris apposita
Servat ad aeterni spem judicis ossa sepulchro
Pascit item Sanctis Tibricolas dapibus.
(Op. cit., coi. 549.)

This custom is not confined to Rome, also in Africa the sepulchre of St Cyprian is called simply *Mensa Cypriani,* and St Augustine explains to the faithful the deep significance of this title.

The concourse at the tombs of the martyrs on their festivals is ever continuous :

Mane salutatum concurritur ; omnis adorat
Pubes : eunt, redeunt solis ad usque obitum.
(Loc. cit., coi. 550.)

Nor is it only the inhabitants of the city who crowd thither; on the feasts of the more renowned saints pilgrims from the "Castelli Romani," from the Picenum, and the Campagna, from Capua, and even from Nola flock to the catacombs. Some devoutly kiss the tomb, others sprinkle upon it oriental perfumes, as was usual in former times.

Oscula perspicuo figunt impressa metallo,
Balsama diffundunt.

(*Loc. cit.,* coi. 551.)

The Pope himself would not willingly forego the pleasure of being present at the eucharistie synaxis which was celebrated at the venerated tomb, and, on such an occasion, he would preach a homily on the Gospel to the people from his raised marble chair:

Fronte sub adversa gradibus sublime tribunal
Tollitur, antistes prédicat unde Deum.

{*Op. cil.,* col. 554.)

The affluence of pilgrims to the cemeteries of the martyrs must, however, have come to an end with the siege of Rome by Witiges and the Goths in the years 537-38, when the barbarians devastated the extra-mural sanctuaries, destroyed the monuments, and violated the tombs. *Ecclesiae et corpora sanctorum Martyrum exterminatae sunt a Gothis,* writes the biographer of Pope Silverius.[1]

Pope Vigilius (538-55), during the earlier period of his stormy pontificate, devoted himself to the restoring of the ruins as far as he could, and of this restoration we find traces in the cemetery of St Callixtus, for instance, where is still to be seen in the crypt of Eusebius, close to the original Philocalian fragments of the hymn of Pope Damasus in honour of that pontiff, the marble reproduction made of it by order of Pope Vigilius.

A most interesting group of inscriptions, belonging to this first period after the siege of Rome by the Goths, enables us to estimate the whole extent of the destruction wrought by them in the extra-mural cemeteries, where they violated, among others, the sepulchre of the martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria, with that of Hippolytus, and laid waste the necropolis of SS Peter and Marcellinus. The restoration by Pope Vigilius of the verses of Damasus is testified to by the following epitaph, the fragments of which were indeed discovered on the Via Labicana, but which was also read in the ninth century by a collector of Roman inscriptions in a cemetery on the Via Salaria:

[1] *Lib. Pont., P.L.* CXXVIII, col. 563-64.

Cum peritura Getae posvissent · castra · svb · vrbe
Moverunt Saneris · bella · nefanda · privs
Istaque sacrilego vertervnt · corde · sepvlchra
Martyribus quondam · rite · sacrata · **piis**
Quos monstrante Deo Domasvs I sibi · papa · probatos

Affixo monuit carmine jure coli.
Sed feriit titulus confracto marmore sanctus
Nec tamen his iterum fosse ferire fuit.
Diruta Vigilius nam mox haec fafa gemiscens,
Hostibus exfulsis, omne novavit ofus.

The Goths having departed, there followed the Visigoths, the Lombards, anti the Saracens, so that peace no longer smiled upon the city of the seven hills. It is not surprising, therefore, that, in spite of all the repairs carried out by Vigilius and his successors in the extra-mural cemeteries, no one was able to arrest the decay of popular devotion to those ancient sanctuaries which lay too far away from the centres of population. Public security was wanting, and but feu Romans had now the courage to pass beyond the city walls and expose themselves in the open and solitary country to attacks by the enemy. For this reason, when the *Liber Pontificalis* from the sixth century onwards speaks of restorations effected in the buildings belonging to the cemeteries, it more often than not adds the melancholy words, *quas in ruinas erant totas,* or, *in ruinis positum renovavit.*

The order given by John III in the middle of the sixth century is significant in this respect, when he *constituit ut oblationes et ampullae vel luminaria in eisdem coemeteriis Per omnes dominicas de Lateranis ministrarentur.*[1] If then it became necessary for the Pope himself to make provision for this—that is, to place to the charge of the administration of the pontifical palace the small sums necessary for the maintenance of the much-diminished religious functions which were carried out in the cemeteries at least on Sundavs —this would suffice to show that the urban titular churches under whose jurisdiction they at one time stood had quickh thrown off this obligation from the moment that the concourse of the faithful and the offerings made on the festivals of the martyrs had suffered considerable diminution.

In the middle of the sixth century there was one Mass on Sundays, which was provided for by the Pope ; that was all. About a hundred years later than the order issued by John III, the liturgical service of the cemetery oratories left much to be desired, since Gregory III was compelled to repeat the same cry : *lisdemquc institutis disposuit, ut in coemeteriis circumquaque positis Romae in die natalitiorum eorum, luminaria ad vigilias faciendas et oblationes de*

[1] *Op. cit.,* coi. 633-24.

patriarchio per oblationarium deportarentur ad celebrandas missas, per quem praeviderit pontifex qui pro tempore fuerit, sacerdotem.[1] It seems that, even so, the generosity of the Pope was not sufficient to disturb the indifference of the Roman titular priests, whose duty it was to celebrate in turn the holy sacrifice in the cemeteries, for the biographer of Sergius I (687-701) mentions it as a special merit of his, that *tempore presbyteratus sui, impigre per coemeteria diversa missarum solemnia celebrabat.*[2]

The reluctance of the Roman clergy is easily understood by anyone who knows the circumstances in which even in these days those priests find themselves whose duty it is to celebrate Mass on every feast-day in the various chapels scattered over the " Agro Romano." At one time the land above the extra-mural cemeteries was covered with gardens and vineyards, which surrounded comfortably furnished dwellings provided with baths, and with whatever else the civilization of those times required in the way of comfort.

When, therefore, in 419 the election of Boniface I was opposed by the party of Eulalius, the Pontiff without more ado withdrew himself into the country : and *habitavit . . . in coemeterio sanctae Felicitatis Martyris via Salaria*[3]—that is to say, in the buildings adjoining that necropolis. A century earlier Pope Liberius had done the same, transferring his residence temporarily to the Via Nomentana : and *habitavit in coemeterio sanctae Agnetis, apud germanam Constantii.*[4] John III followed this example in the time of Narses, and, having retired to the Via Appia, *retinuit se in coemeterio sanctorum Tiburtii et Valeriani et habitavit ibi multum temporis, ut etiam episcopos consecraret ibidem.*[5]

An inscription in the Museum at the Basilica of St Paul in Rome, gives us some idea of what might then be included under the general term of " Christian cemetery " :

NOMINE · DEI · PATRIS · OMNIPOT(ent) IS · ET · DOMINI · NOSTRI ·
JESV p · FIL
SANCTI PARACLETI · EVSEBIVS · IN · FA(re) OVAVIT · CYMITERIV
TOTV.
OLVMNAS · IN · PORTICOS · PICTVR(as) · (q)VAS · IN · RVINIS ·
ERAT TOTAS · ET
TV CVM TEGVLAS · ET · TABL ___ N ET ACVTOS ET MATERI . . .
TOTA · BALINEV · MARMO . . . QVE MINVS ABVIT · ET · SCAMNA . . .
TRAS · SPECLARA · ITEM · IN · s(upe)RIORA · MARMORAVIT PAL . . .
OSTRA · INCINOS · ET · CLABES . . OSVIT · VT · POTVIT VSQUE ·
D(um)

[1] *Of. cit.*, col. 1029-30.
[2] *Of. cit.*, col. 185-86.
[3] *Of. cit.*, col. 625-26.
[4] *Of. cit.*, col. 29-30.
[5] *Of. cit.*, col. 891-92.

(es)SET · IN · SECVLO · FECIT · RELIQv(a) (f)ABRICA · QVANDO EXIVIT · d(c)

(s)ECVLO ı REMISIT · ALVMNIS · SVI(s) (pe)cVNIA ET . IPSI FABRICAVE

RVNT INTROITV ı AT · MARTYRES (qu)OD · EST · IN · PVBLICV · A · FVND(amentis)

(fa)BRICABIT · MESAS · AT · MARTYRES . . . OTAS ı FECIT · AQVAM · IN · VALINE(um)

PER · MANGANA · FECIT · AT · CON . . . A · CVBICVLV · ET · CANCELLV · FEC(it)

. . . CAVSA · FVRES · FECIT · CIA · MVL(ta) MALA · FACENT · ITEM · SAR'r(a tecta)

A · SVSCEPIT · SIGILLA · CINQVE · IN · POR · (p)oSVIT · COM- PODIOLA

This noble benefactor of the fifth century, Eusebius by name, in order to restore in a suitable manner the entire cemetery—which we are unable to identify for certain—began with the exterior portico and the roofs. In the portico he entirely restored the frescoes which were cracked all over, and replaced the ancient columns or pilasters with new ones. He also put fresh tiles on the roof and renewed the rafters and beams, completed the marble facings of the bath which were wanting, provided it with benches, and finally caused the windows to be mended. On the upper floor he likewise faced the walls with marble, added railings to the staircase, and repaired the halls.

When the generous donor eventually departed this life, he left to his heirs the necessary sum of money for finishing the works, so that they were able to construct the steps which were to lead directly from the public road to the various *cubicula* in which the martyrs were buried. Marble tables were placed before the more celebrated sepulchres, but whether these were intended for the celebration of the Eucharist, or were merely *mensae oleorum,* we do not know. The conduits which carried water to the bath were constructed entirely anew, and supplied with windlasses or pumps at the expense of the heirs, and, as in the past, thieves had several times broken into the building and rifled it with impunity, the entrance was enclosed with an iron gateway adorned, apparently, with small statues.

These country houses furnished with all the comfort possible in those days—including the bath, the garden, and the loggia—must certainly have fallen into neglect and ruin in the seventh and eighth centuries, together with the neighbouring basilicas belonging to the cemeteries, which were devastated more than once by the barbarians.

One can, then, well perceive how the clergy of the various

titles, under whose control the extra-mural cemeteries had been placed from the fourth century onwards, easily lost all interest in them, so much so that the Popes, beginning with John III, were constrained to supply priests from elsewhere at the cost of the Patriarchate. The prospect of spending the night in a dilapidated house, ill-protected against cold and rain, was not a particularly attractive one for the titular priests, who, besides, were expected to descend into the crypts in the middle of the night, accompanied by some cleric, to sing Matins there before saying Mass. This was too arduous a duty, and it is not altogether surprising that the devotion of Sergius I in accomplishing it during the time that he spent as a parish priest was regarded as an exceptional case.

The very unsafe condition of the country districts around Rome during the various wars between Lombards, Greeks, and Romans, from the seventh to the ninth century, the deserted condition of the buildings attached to the cemeteries, and the state of complete decadence to which the Eternal City was then reduced, determined the Popes Paul I (757-67), Paschal I (817-24), and Leo IV (847-55), in order to save the bodies of the martyrs from neglect and profanation, to take the extreme measure of placing them in safety within the city itself. But even before this general translation, a new factor arose, which gave a special form to the liturgical veneration of the martyrs and greatly assisted its development.

Having once laid down the principle that this veneration should bear a distinctly funereal character in the sense already explained, and that it should be localized, as it were, at the tomb of the martyr, the piety of the Christians during the period immediately following the reign of Constantine evolved a means of giving to each martyr as many tombs as might be desired. It was sufficient to deposit in a cenotaph a portion, however small, of the bones of a saint, or a fragment of a veil which had touched his body, for the new tomb to be considered by a certain *fictio juris* as a new sepulchre of the martyr, and so to enjoy the customary liturgical rights.

Now, it was possible to construct as many of these nominal tombs as might be desired, so this explains how it comes about that the bodies of many saints are venerated in different churches, and why the *cultus* of some saints became in the fifth century almost universal throughout the Christian world. Small relics of St Stephen scattered about Africa and Italy, for instance, furnished an occasion for erecting a great number of basilicas in honour of the Protomartyr. John I (523-26), being in possession of some fragments of the bones of the Apostles Philip and James,

consecrated near the Baths of Constantine the great *Apostoleion* as a votive monument in thanksgiving for the victory of Narses over the Goths. Felix IV (526-30) did the same on the Sacra Via, where he transformed the two halls of the *Heroon* of Romulus and of the temple of the *Sacra Urbs* into a magnificent basilica dedicated to the Anargyri, Cosmas and Damian.

When Gregory III (731-41) therefore, in order to make a protest against the heresy of the Byzantine Iconoclasts, built an oratory in the Vatican Basilica which he dedicated to the memory of the saints of the whole world, and, having placed there as many relics as he could collect, decreed that their festival commemorations should be celebrated daily, he did not introduce any fresh liturgical rule, but merely applied the ritual rules already in practice, so as to extend to the Vatican Basilica the local privileges which had originally been exclusively attached to the real and genuine tombs of the martyrs. The *Heroon* of St Peter, on account of the relics which it contained, was thus to represent officially the sepulchres of all the saints of the whole world, and to enjoy in consequence their prerogatives.

It will be useful to quote the exact text of the *Liber Pontificalis* concerning this institution of Pope Gregory : *Hie fecit oratorium intra eamdeni basilicam, juxta arcum principalem, parte virorum, in quo recondidit in honorem Salvatoris sanctaeque ejus Genitricis reliquias, sanctorumque Apostolorum, vel omnium sanctorum Martyrum ac Confessorum perfectorumque justorum, toto in orbe terrarum requiescentium. Quarum festa vigiliarum a monachis trium monasteriorum illic servientium, quotidie per ordinem exsistentia, atque natalitiorum missas in eodem loco celebrare instituens, in Canone missae hoc adiecit, ita a sacerdote dicendum: quarum soleninitas hodie in conspectu tuae majestatis celebratur, Domine Deus noster in toto orbe terrarum.*[1]

We must confess that this passage is not marked by excessive clearness. Indeed, as regards the Mass, it appears doubtful whether it speaks of a daily synaxis in honour of all the saints whose *natalis* occurred on that day in any part of the globe, as would seem to be suggested by the clause added to the Canon, or merely of a more or less long succession of *natalitia* in honour of those saints only whose relics were preserved in the oratory. The text of the *Pontificalis* also admits of this interpretation, since it says that such *festa* recurred *quotidie per ordinem exsistentia,* and implied the *natalitiorum missas.*

Perhaps those are nearest to the truth who hold that both interpretations are legitimate, and who combine the two,

[1] *Lib. Pont., P.L.* CXXVIII, col. 1025-36.

attributing to Gregory III two distinct liturgical institutions; the one, a daily commemoration—inserted in the Canon—in honour of all the saints in the world whose feasts recurred on that day ; the other, a *series natalitiorum,* which meant a night vigil and Mass, in honour of those martyrs only whose relics were venerated in the oratory.

Any other interpretation would seem to be improbable if only because otherwise either the Offices at the tomb of St Peter would have had to be transferred to the new Gregorian chapel, or else the clergy would have had to carry out double services every day.

An *Ordo Romanus,* published by Tommasi,[1] brings before us a further development of the *cultus* of the martyrs at Rome. Up to the time of Pope Adrian, the performance of their Office, or, more correctly, the reading of their *Passiones* on the day of their *natalis,* was limited to their primitive sepulchral or titular churches within the city, but this Pontiff ordered that those historical Lessons should be read also in St Peter's : *Passiones Sanctorum vel gesta ipsorum, usque ad Hadriani tempora* (772-95) *tantummodo ibi legebantur ubi erat ecclesia ipsius Sancti vel titulus erat; ipse vero a tempore suo renuere jussit et in ecclesia sancti Petri legendas esse constituit.*

This edict of Pope Adrian—necessitated perhaps by the neglected condition of the cemeteries, in which divine service took place only at rare intervals—whilst it seems merely another link in the chain of Roman tradition such as it had been left by Gregory III, contained, nevertheless, in itself the seeds of a complete liturgical revolution. The festivals of the saints, which until then had almost everywhere borne a funereal and local character, became instead, by the influence of Pope Adrian, solemnities common to the whole Roman Church, but detached from the place where their bodies or relics rested, the Offices concerning them being celebrated in St Peter's itself—that is, in the cathedral of the Eternal City. The principles which govern our liturgical calendars ever since the fourteenth century were already established; henceforth, time was merely needed to develop them.

A comparison between the primitive Philocalian *Fcriale,* the Martyrology of St Jerome, and the later Roman calendars of the eleventh century is extremely instructive.

In the first, with two exceptions, only martyrs belonging to Rome and the neighbourhood are noted, and the place is always indicated where the sepulchral synaxis of the *natalitia*

[1] *Opera,* Ed. Vezzosi, vol. xv, p. 325.

was then held : *Fabiani in Calisti, et Sebastiani in Cata~ cumbas . . . Agnetis in Nomentana . . . Partheni et Caloceri in Calisti . . . Ostense VII ballistaria, Cyriaci, Largi, Crescentiani, Memmiae, Smaragdi;* which is to say that on January 20 the liturgical Office oi St Fabian was not celebrated anywhere in Rome except in the cemetery of St Callixtus, nor that of St Sebastian outside the extent of his cemetery *ad Catacumbas,* and so on with the others.

The Martyrology of St Jerome, too, usually contains an indication of the place of burial of the saint whose *natalis* it is, this being a proof of the original liturgical intention of the lists therein inscribed.—*XVI Kai. Jun. Romae via Salaria vetere . . . depositio Liberi episcopi; VI Kai. Oct. Romae, via Appia in coemeterio Calisti, depositio sancti Eusebii episcopi; IUI Kai. Oct. Romae ad guttas, sancti, Stactei; III Kai. Oct. Romae, via Salaria, milliario VI, dedicatio basilicae Angeli Michaelis.*

In the time of Pope Adrian I these indications of the sepulchral synaxes of the Roman martyrs were becoming negligible, from the moment that scarcely anyone visited the extra-mural cemeteries, and that the liturgical Offices in their honour were regularly celebrated instead at the Vatican Basilica.

In contrast to the later calendars with names of martyrs, the compilers of which, undisturbed by liturgical considerations, only troubled themselves to join together lists of saints from every country, with the object of filling in every day of the year, the Roman calendars, on the other hand, from the early Middle Ages down to the thirteenth century, preserved intact in this at least the primitive tradition, because, intended as they were for the benefit of public worship, they admitted only those feasts which were genuinely Roman, and which were actually celebrated in the various sanctuaries of the city. We have evidence of this from very early days in the various editions of the Roman Sacramentaries, and in the lists of the Lessons habitually read at the Mass, as has been shown, for instance, by Morin, in a manner worthy of his reputation, in regard to the Capitulary of Würzburg so often spoken of in our preceding volumes.

The Roman calendar, compiled from these valuable lists of the Gospels which, for the most part, date back to the seventh century, is intensely interesting. The small number of saints included in the series who were not Roman by birth had all acquired a long while since the rights of citizenship in the Eternal City, for more than one church in which their relics were venerated took its name from them, such as : St Felix *in Pincis,* St Vincent, St Anastasius, St Agatha, St Vitalis, SS Gervase and Protase, St Apollinaris, St Euplius, St

Adrian, St Euphemia, the holy Anargyri, St Cesarius, St Theodore, St Mennas, and St Martin.

In the Würzburg lists two Masses are assigned to January 20 in accordance with the number of the eucharistie synaxes, of which one was held in the cemetery *ad Catacumbas,* at the tomb of St Sebastian, and the other in the cemetery of St Callixtus, at the tomb of St Fabian. The same thing recurs on the twenty-second of the same month with two separate Masses, one being celebrated on behalf of the deacon Vincent in his oratory at the Vatican ; the other at *Aquas Salvias,* where the head of the martyred Persian monk Anastasius had been placed during the Pontificate of Honorius I (625-38).

On July 28 two eucharistie synaxes again occur, the first in the Basilica of St Felix at the third milestone on the Via Portuensis, the second three miles farther on, in the cemetery of Generosa *ad sextum Philippi,* where rested the martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus, and *Viatrix.* So, too, on August 6, in the case of the martvr Sixtus—who was buried in the cemetery of St Callixtus in the papal crypt—of the deacons Felicissimus and Agapitus interred in that of St Pretextatus, and similarly each time that the tombs of the saints of any one group commemorated on one and the same day were situated in separate localities.

It is true that here and there the compiler of the list in question attempts to simplify matters by combining two or more separate commemorations of martyrs. He must, however, have done this on his own authority and for use in his own country, not just because it was so at Rome ; indeed he did it with so little intelligence that on August 30, for example, having suppressed the feast of the beheading of St John the Baptist, he nevertheless assigns the Lesson from the Gospel relating the martyrdom of the Baptist to be read at the synaxis in the cemetery of Commodilla at the tomb of the martyrs Felix and Adauctus.

It may be said that, with very few exceptions, the *Capitularia Evangeliorum* reflect faithfully the ancient liturgical tradition of Rome, and that at the end of the seventh century the *natalitia Martyrum* still represented solemnities distinctly connected with the cemeteries. There were from that time, it is true, festivals which were considered to be common to the whole Christian world, such, for instance, as the feasts of the apostles, and some of the more eminent martyrs as St Stephen and St Lawrence. These formed, however, rare exceptions, for the rule still held good that each church should celebrate the feasts of its own martyrs.

The innovation introduced by Pope Adrian I consisted in

his extending to the Vatican Basilica, probably on account of the *Heroon* of Gregory HI, the privileges which, until that time, were considered to be exclusively attached to the sepulchral sanctuaries of the martyrs in the catacombs. He did not, however, admit in his new calendar the names of any saints except those belonging to Rome, nor does the privilege appear to have been granted to any church other than the Basilica of St Peter.

Abroad, where in the eighth century the Roman liturgical books were readily accepted in their entirety, the papal stations entered in the Sacramentaries known to us under the names of the Gelasian and the Gregorian were soon all accorded the rights of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon citizenship. At Rome, on the other hand, the old tradition prevailed for some time longer, and with the exception of St Peter's, the titular churches and the extra-mural cemeteries confined themselves generally to celebrating only those *natalitia* which concerned themselves.

We have a fine record of the zeal which the various churches in the city showed in celebrating their own *natalitia Martyruni* in the two marble slabs of the eleventh century which are preserved at St Silvester *in Capite,* and which contain the *Notitia nataliciorum Sanctorum hic requiescentium* already reproduced in the first volume of this work.[1] Lists of this kind must have existed, without doubt, in other Roman churches.

We have spoken elsewhere of the calendar of the Basilica of St Peter in the twelfth century.[2] Without repeating what has already been said, we will merely draw attention to the fact that, if that list of festivals, when compared with the series of the solemnities noted in the documents already mentioned, represents an immense development of the *Santorale,* yet it still remains constant to the old principle which had guided the compilation of the primitive calendar of the saints. The feasts there mentioned of SS Cyrus and John, St Apollonia, St Dorothy, St Margaret, St Benedict, St Scholastica, St Martina, etc., were all truly Roman feasts because they were celebrated in the churches which the Byzantine period and the Middle Ages respectively had given to the Eternal City. In this sense was maintained the traditional liturgical principle of the strictly local character of the feasts.

The *Ordo Romanus* of Benedict the Canon in the twelfth century always reflects this spirit. At that time the Pontiff still took part regularly in the stations. He used to go to St Peter's on the Third Sunday of Advent; he was present,

[1] *Sacramentary,* vol. i, pp. 254-57.
[2] *Op. cit.,* vol. i, pp. 233 *iqq.*

with the *regnum* on his head, at the station on December 26 at the round church of St Stephen, and he walked barefoot in procession from St Martina to St Mary Major on the feasts of the Purification and the Annunciation. The calendar, indeed, accentuates the local character of the feasts inscribed therein, as when on the festival of the Chair of St Peter, *qua prius Romae sedit,* on February 22, it prescribes : *Statio in ejtis basilica. Dominus Papa debet sedere in Cathedra ad missam.*

The *Ordo* of Benedict the Canon is taken up almost entirely with the description of the rites of the so-called *Proprium de tempore,* which constitute the most ancient and the most attractive part of the Roman Liturgy with the stational rites of the *natalitia,* of Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. The *Sanctorale* is hardly represented in it at all, since there are mentioned only the papal stations of the four great feasts of the Blessed Virgin, the feasts of the Apostles Peter, Paul, and Andrew, and those of St John and St Lawrence, which were, however, all celebrated in their respective basilicas. A slightly later addition records also the days on which the Pope wore the tiara, among them being the feast of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs, *in festivitate sancti Martini ubi dicitur titulus Aequitii,* that of St Clement, of St Sylvester, etc. It is evident, then, that the traditional rule had not yet been abandoned of celebrating almost exclusively the feasts proper to Rome, nor that of celebrating them in common in their respective titular basilicas in the presence of the Pope and the higher clergy of the city.

It is not until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that the spirit which had inspired the composition of the ancient Roman calendar was abandoned in order to adopt new principles of a less local and more universal character. This liturgical evolution, moreover, coincides with another most important evolution of the ecclesiastical law itself and of the external life of the Catholic community which began to show itself during the fourteenth century.

Up to this time the hierarchical constitution of the Church arranged almost invariably the external carrying out of its functions on the principle of locality and permanency. Whilst forming part of the immense Catholic family under the one and only Vicar of Jesus Christ, each church or diocese constituted in those days an organism complete in itself, with a local life that was often both powerful and flourishing. At the head of each church was a bishop, bound to his own diocese by a spiritual espousal, which was regarded as being so indissoluble that, in the ninth century, Pope Formosus was held to be illegally chosen and an anti-pope, solely because from the See of Porto he had ascended to that of St Peter.

To each member of the clergy was likewise assigned a church—*titulus*—or some definite office, in view of which he was ordained and from which he could not lawfully detach himself. The consecrating bishop ordained such and such clerics, acolytes, subdeacons, priests, etc., *ad titulum Sabinae, Eusebii, de Velabru,* as one then expressed it, according to circumstances and requirements. Here we have the origin of the *titulus,* necessary to-day for ordinations *in sacris.* The clergy were consequently strictly parochial, as we should now say, taking their titles from the church or office to which they were appointed: *presbyter tituli Nicomedis, diaconus regionis IV, acolithus de dominico Clementis,* etc.

Even the monks, although exempted at a very early period from episcopal authority, so adapted themselves to this ordinance of the hierarchy that each abbey became fashioned as a separate church, having its own prelate, clergy, and territory. This idea of the clergy being connected with some particular place was greatly strengthened in the case of the monks by the vow which they each took of remaining in their own monastery, from which it was not lawful for them at any time to migrate to another. Following the example of the secular clergy, they also styled themselves: *Paulus diaconus Cassinensis, Beraldus abbas sanctae Mariae,* etc.

The principle of the permanency of an ecclesiastic in his own office and his own church, by virtue of which bishops, parish and other priests, abbots and monks were each and all irremovable in their several ecclesiastical posts, kept very much alive in the dioceses, parishes, and abbeys the feeling that each formed a separate moral unit of its own, which pervaded the whole life of the clergy in those days. Every church, every chapter, every monastery, as it aimed at being sufficient to its own maintenance, so it also cultivated with religious zeal the arts and the sciences, with the object of surrounding its own feasts and ceremonies with a greater brilliance. This was no division in the great Catholic Church, but merely a convenient organizing of its members to meet the special requirements of an age in which, in civil life as well, the Christian States, broken in pieces, vied each with the other for independence even *quei che un muro ed una fossa serra.*[1]

Then came the fourteenth century, when, feudalism being abolished, the peoples began to awake to a fuller consciousness of their own national unity. Together with this movement there arose, though from other causes, the great Mendicant Orders, which, in contrast to the Benedictines with their monastic life and the clergy of an earlier epoch,

[1] Dante, *rur^atorio,* vi, 84.—Ti.

tied to the spot to which they were consecrated, formed a powerful spiritual army depending directly from the central authority and the Pontifical Curia.

Hence the Franciscans and the Dominicans broke down to a certain extent the diocesan and territorial barriers. They did not do as the monks, who in face of the Church ruled by the bishop had organized, not indeed an Order, but another *ecclesia* also local in character, with a separate clergy and people depending from the abbot. The Mendicant Friars, on the contrary, constituted an interdiocesan body which was to be the right hand of the Pope, and at a time when the sense of the unity of the Christian family was much diminished owing, to some extent, to narrow local jealousies, they proposed to act as heralds and missionaries, not of this or of that diocese, but of the entire Catholic Church, of the " great Church," as Celsus had already called it in the third century.

Before this new conception of the ecclesiastical and regular life—which at first surprised its contemporaries, just as later on the Jesuits were to surprise their fellow-clergy, when, in their Rule, they omitted the choral recitation of the Office—some even of those liturgical traditions, which up to that time were held in honourable regard by the whole Christian world, had to bow and yield themselves to adaptation.

The Mendicant Friars were not appointed nor tied to any *titulus* or definite *ecclesia,* but formed the flying squadron, as it were, under the immediate command of the central authority of the *minister generalis* and of the Pope. Therefore, in place of the *ad titulum N.N. Aequitii, Eusebii,* etc., they received holy Orders in the service *de catholica,* as it would have been finely expressed in the third century.

The present phrase *titulus paupertatis,* which is now in use for the ordination of the regular clergy, simply represents a legal deviation from the primitive meaning of the word *titulus,* which during the Middle Ages had come to signify—not the sacred spot itself—but the income set aside for the maintenance of the ecclesiastic appointed thereto.

The Friars Minor adopted from the outset the *Breviarunt Curiae Papalis,* which was far less onerous than that which was recited at that time in the great Roman basilicas. Through the initiative of their General Aymon, and with the approbation of Gregory IX (1227-41), they carried their liturgical reforms still further, including the calendar, to which, after increasing the number of the Lessons on many festivals from three to nine, they added a large number of saints from all the countries of the East, and from Italy in particular. Radulfus of Tongres has discussed these innovations in his *De Canonum Observantia,* and it is quite un-

necessary to follow him in that petty controversy, It remains, however, a fact that it was at that moment that the Roman liturgical tradition which we have been following so far, was completely wrecked, and gave place to other liturgical rules less dependent on local uses, but more in harmony with the new requirements of the universal Church.

The innovations, though bold, were logical, therefore they adapted themselves to the usual ecclesiastical regulations, and when the Breviary and the calendar in use specially at Rome were made obligatory for the whole of Christianity, the Roman codices also necessarily became less distinctly Roman, and, laying aside their primitive local character, took their place as exponents of the devotion of the whole world.

CHAPTER II

EFFECT OF THE YEARLY LITURGICAL CYCLE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF POPULAR DEVOTION

WE wish to give here to the word " liturgy " its fullest signification, and to speak of all that complexity of sacrifices, rites, and chants, and of the artistic inspirations in the mind of the painters, the sculptors, and the architects, who unite their talents and their prayers so that there may therefrom the sacred edifice of the Catholic Church. Liturgy, then, is to be here understood to mean a vast and ordered synthesis of the affections towards the supreme and infinite Good, by means of which synthesis the Church carries on for ever that perfect worship in spirit and in truth which Christ came to render unceasingly to his divine Father.

In this sense the Liturgy is indeed a marvellous poem, transcending the masterpieces of any other polity, a poem to the making of which have contributed the greatest geniuses of the human race, and which far from reflecting the multiplicity of all these human composers, reveals instead the divine nature of the one Spirit who animates and guides the mystical body of the Church in all its wondrous complexity.

But the sacred Litu gy does not only comprise the relations or the aspirations of the Church to Christ and to God, it also contains and transmits to us who have faith the divine word of the most holy Trinity, and it is because of this that the Liturgy not only puts to the proof the efficacy of its prayers on the divine heart—*omnipotentia supplex*—but also exerts a powerful influence on the naturally Christian soul of man, and in a special number on the religious education of the masses. It is for this reason that the Liturgy, from ancient times, was called the " rule of faith " : *Legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi.*

Nor do we treat here of a *catechesis* or of a meditation founded on abstractions and metaphysics, with regard to which the people hardly ever succeed in grasping that which lies hidden *sotto il velame delli versi strani.*[1] The Liturgy, on the contrary—as the true mouthpiece of God—aims at being eminently for the people, because it treats man accord-

[1] Dante, ***In/erno,*** ix, 63.—Th.

ing to his nature—that is, as a being formed of both spirit and matter, who, consequently, infers and abstracts that which is conceivable from that which is perceptible, and which, by reason of its external qualities, is manifest to the senses. So in order to be sure of reaching the intellect, it first conquers and subjugates the senses and the heart, and by means of all the attractions of art, painting, sculpture, and architecture, of music, poetry, and literature, binds the imagination and compels it to act as the handmaid of faith, at the very moment in which it transmits to the intellect the message of God.

It is especially under this aspect, which we may call pedagogic, that we desire to consider the sacred Liturgy, and to point out the immense influence which it can exert in the catechetical training of the faithful, if only, as in former times, this ecclesiastical Liturgy be participated in collectively, and with fervour by the Catholic family, and as the spirit of our mother the Church would have us do.

Although comparisons are generally unpleasing, it is not always possible to avoid making them. It is with surprise and wonder that we are obliged to admit that in these days, in spite of our zeal in carrying out functions, in forming associations and celebrating centenaries, the knowledge of God makes but little headway amongst Christians, rather is it daily more ignored by the worldly and indifferent society in the midst of which we live. Even those who are Catholics in name and in intention often know very little of the Catechism, and even if, for the most part, they are not ignorant of the actual words of the Acts of faith, hope, and charity, yet one cannot therefore say that the Gospel is in truth the standard and rule of life of all those who inscribe their names in the various Catholic societies.

The inadequateness of such knowledge of God on earth—*non est scientia Dei in terra,* as the Prophet would once more lament—appears also in the various modern forms of devotional art and literature beginning with those expressions of enfeebled piety to be found especially in the elegant little books of devotion whose exaggerated style, full of sighings and constant interruptions by dots and dashes, is founded entirely on sentimentalism. Such books as these, while they sterilize the most tremendous, and at the same time the least far-seeing of our powers, the heart, certainly do not bestow any light on our intellect. The harm which they do is irreparable, for when the momentary emotion is over, and the flowery fancies of youth have passed with the years, when the battle of life is beginning, the young men and maidens who until then regarded piety, not as the support of their faith, but as an outlet for sentiment, now

realize the barrenness of their soul and, despairing of religion which they have never really known, fall into the abyss of unbelief.

What has brought about this catastrophe? Undoubtedly it is due to their faulty religious education, which has caused their hearts to beat with sudden palpitations without having taken very much trouble to form in their minds that foundation of eternal truths which reveal to us Christ, who is our light, our way, and our life. Attempts arc very often made nowadays to educate the faithful by directing them to this or that devotional practice. The early Fathers, in truth, knew only one devotion, widespread as the Catholic Church itself and holy with its own holiness, which without setting up any antithesis or negativing any of those lesser forms of piety contained in our manuals, yet comprehended them in their entirety. This *devotio*—the word is taken from the verb *devovere,* which signifies the complete and absolute dedication of the whole man to God—is the Catholic life itself, drawn from its first and purest sources, which are the Sacraments and the Liturgy.

One of the initial and fatal errors of Protestantism is that of individualizing religion through the principle of private judgement, and of presenting before God the Father not one great family united by faith, but isolated individuals. Thus, its followers came to deny the social character of the Church, giving to Christ scattered members instead of a mystical body of believers. The spirit of the Catholic Liturgy, on the other hand, is essentially social, in its character public, tangible, and dramatic. In this lies the secret of its early popularity. " Pray for me," said one of the faithful to Bishop Fructuosus as he was about to ascend the pyre. He replied in the words of the Canon : " It is fitting that I should pray for the whole Catholic Church spread throughout the world."

The Church, says St Ambrose, presents the most perfect form of admirable communism and social life. As it has been redeemed collectively, and as it is collective in its constitution, so it believes, hopes, and loves collectively, combats collectively, is persecuted collectively, prays and triumphs collectively. The Church lives through Christ; not through Christ the Head separated from his mystical body, but through Christ, Head and Body, *quod est Ecclesia.*

The soul, the mind, the collective movement of this great and universal heart which is the Church, are represented by all that complexity of devotion and worship which is called " liturgy." When the Church prays, it is Christ, it is the Holy Spirit, who pray and the prayer, besides the power which it exerts on the heart of God, contains also the rule of

life for the faithful. *Domine, doce nos orare,* the Apostles humbly besought the divine Saviour—*Sic vos orabitis,* he answered, *sic,* and therewith gave them the formula by which he initiated the Church into the secrets of that prayer which is called *omnipotentia supplex;* secrets which have been preserved ever since in the Catholic body, as a family heir-loom which through the sacred hierarchy is transmitted from generation to generation.

We assert that the Liturgy contains a spiritual teaching more authoritative than any other, because it does not express the thought of any individual theologian, but proceeds from the eternal truth itself, which is God, and speaks to us through the Church, which he has established on earth : *columna et firmamentum veritatis.* We further declare that the Liturgy contains a spiritual teaching which is efficacious and the best suited to the nature of the human soul, especially amongst the people who remain ever child-like, because it does not consist of mere barren intellectual speculation, but, on the contrary, enlists all the resources of art, music, paint-ing, sculpture, and literature, in order to uplift the soul, giving to holy and popular worship a predominantly dramatic form—that is to say, the form which speaks most intimately to the souls of the masses.

Finally, the sacred Liturgy contains a spiritual teaching which is the most complete in itself, because it does not dwell almost conclusively, as so many personal devotions do, on one particular mystery, but in the course of the entire year it unfolds before the faithful and explains to them in a marvellous order the whole series of the dogmas concerning our holy redemption. The Liturgy is the real *Breviarium,* or *compendium* of the Scriptures, the popular exposition of the divine revelation, and of the truths which we must believe in order to be saved : *Legum credendi lex statuat supplicandi.*

Again, most wonderful of all, this collection of truths, this yearly series of Christian mysteries has not merely an his-torical value and is not simply commemorative of past events. The Church, indeed, represents them to us under a certain dramatic form which is the one most fitted to touch the souls of the people, and which enables us truly to live them over again. Nor is this all; Christ has not passed away: *Jesus Christus heri et hodie, ipse et in saecula.* He is ever in his Church, and as he once was born and taught, suffered and rose again under Tiberius and Pontius Pilate, the spiritual influence of these mysteries of redemption remains as long as the life of the Church in this world, for it is in the Church itself that to-day also Christ is born, teaches and redeems souls, applying to them the fruits of his own redemption.

Although in the Breviary and the Missal we distinguish from the late Middle Ages two parts—that is, the *Proprium de Tempore* and the *Proprium Sanctorum*—yet this distinction does not make a break in the wonderful unity of the liturgical cycle which is essentially christological : *Finis legis Christus.*

As in the ancient basilicas the Gospel scenes represented in mosaic or in painting along the walls of the aisles prepared the mind for the triumph of *Christus Pantocrator* who was seated mystically on the throne of his divinity in the golden centre of the apse, so the true liturgical cycle of the Church is represented by the *Proprium de Tempore,* which, beginning with Advent, passes through the four weeks of expectation before Christmas, through the Epiphany, the forty days of Christ's fasting in the desert, the two weeks of his Passion, the fifty days of the Paschal feasts, and on to the Ascension and Pentecost, completing in this way our catechetical instruction on the mystery of Christ. A very solid foundation of our faith is thus laid by our mother the Church with divine skill ; for she does not merely point out to us the Word, but seeks by this long spiritual forbearance, as we may say, to form within us the semblance of Christ: *Hoc enim sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu.*

For this reason the Gospel cycle of the Church occupies the entire year, so that the faithful may not simply glance at the mysteries, but that, by continuous acts of piety and practices of devotion in keeping with the spirit which the mystery aims at arousing, repeated for days and weeks, the soul may assimilate them and be transformed in them, and in this way may celebrate not merely an historical event apart from itself, but a new phase of its own interior life, which is the mystical life of Christ in the heart of the believer. In order that the Liturgy may achieve this sublime end, it is necessary for it to be that which the Church desires, not only a prayer of our whole being, but also a method of instruction above all catechetical, a system of spiritual education, which, like every other school, has its own rules and its own methods.

The aim proposed by the reform of the calendar of the universal Church by Pope Pius X, in taking away from the *Proprium Sanctorum* many offices of saints, was that of restoring the ancient *Proprium de Tempore* to its former place of honour, bearing in mind its complete and perfect unity from Advent to the last Sunday after Pentecost. Those who would appreciate the beauty of this liturgical poem must see it in all its integrity, noting its inner divisions into cycles or special series, without these series being too often broken up or, we might say, ousted by the *Proprium Sanctorum,* which, as is well known, has no unity at all, each day or each feast being independent. Nevertheless, in these last centuries

the " Proper of Saints " had ended by wellnigh gaining the upper hand and with its innumerable festivals shutting out the grander lines of the annual cycle *de Tempore,* that classic poem due to the genius of the early Fathers.

The feasts of the saints from early times had their places in the ecclesiastical calendar : but as they do not form a separate scries, each one standing alone apart from the rest, so in the golden period of the Liturgy the Church in its wisdom placed them like gems in the *Proprium de Tempore,* doing so with great judgement and with an aesthetic sense of proportion of a high order, in the manner employed by the artist when, in order to enhance the grand figure of Christ in the apse of the Christian basilica, he surrounded it with a circle of martyrs laying down their jewelled diadems at his feet.

This is precisely the object of the *Proprium Sanctorum* in the Breviary and in the Missal ; not to replace, not to weaken the efficacy of the cycle *de Tempore,* but to adorn it and to give it greater variety and grace; opening out within it from time to time a little parenthesis, as it were, in order to illustrate practically by means of a few well-chosen examples from the vast field of hagiography, in what way the life and mystery of Christ can be realized and lived again by the faithful.

These parentheses, however, need to be restrained, and, above all, well arranged. For the rest, it is fitting that the cycle *de Tempore* should remain free and intact, and we cannot do better than accept and second these ideals of the Church as they are made known to us in the last reform of the Breviary of St Pius V. The Apostolic See, inspired by the traditional principles of St Pius V and of Benedict XIV, has begun to restore with wonderful skill the liturgical year on its original lines, removing here and there certain additions of a later period.

The undertaking was a very delicate one, dealing as it did with a sacred structure to which every period and every taste had contributed something of its own ; but Pius X, of immortal memory, carried out the reform with sound judgement united to great discretion. The work has not been as yet completed, for it is a very perilous matter to remove from an ancient edifice the later work which has overlaid the primitive design.

This enterprise in the field of liturgy is reserved to the Church alone ; but we on our part, especially by means of the diffusion of liturgical knowledge amongst clergy and people, can prepare the ground for the initiatory work of the supreme authority, having in view not the making of archaîological discoveries, but the leading of souls straight back to the

sources of Catholic devotion, lessening their present individualistic tendency and giving them instead a more social character.

With regard to this diffusion of liturgical knowledge, it may be asked, How can this be put into practice? What, for instance, is the best method of hearing Mass with profit to one's self, or of receiving Holy Communion? No better way can be suggested than that of keeping in touch with the various cycles of the sacred Liturgy, all of which lead to Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, and in the sacrifice of the cross and the altar demonstrate the realization and continuation of all that they offer to our faith, our hope, and our love.

In this way the Mass and the Communion will have, besides their essential signification, a special meaning according to the season, and there will be in the devotion of the people that sense of constant variety which captivates their faculties, and which always furnishes abundant nourishment as well to private piety. Thus, in the four weeks of Advent, mankind by reason of the promise of God made to our first parents, to Abraham and to David, feels itself filled with Christ: *Qui fuit Abraham . . . qui fuit Adam.*

The joy with which this announcement of the coming of the Redeemer fills mankind is tempered by the austere teaching of the Baptist, who, as a preparation for the Advent of Christ, preaches conversion and penance for all men. There is no question here of events long past and done with. He who once was born at Bethlehem during the census enjoined by Quirinus must be born again a thousand times through grace in the hearts of the faithful and, above all, must make his Epiphany or manifestation amid many nations, who, like Israel, sunk in lethargy, still await his coming.

The heart of the Christian is not a tomb, in which Christ lies without movement and without life. On the contrary, he desires *inhabitare per fidem in cordibus*—that is, to grow, to move, to make efficient that *mysterium* of man's redemption which is centred in the cross.

The deceptive sweetness of Eden's fruit has spread throughout our members the *virus* of unbridled concupiscence. Thus the work of the regeneration of the human race begins in Lent with the forty days of holy fasting in the desert, by means of which, the ardour of passion being allayed, the mind also becomes more disposed to listen to that Word of eternal life which once filled the rebellious children of Abraham with fear when they said to Moses: "Speak thou to us, and we will hear; let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die."[1]

Lent is a period of training for the Christian warrior before entering the lists—the simile comes from the Liturgy—a vast

[1] Exod. XX, Xg.

course of spiritual exercises enjoined upon the whole Church, a special period in the divine system of Catholic sanctity during which we devote ourselves preferably to the acts of what is known as the Purificative Way. The bodily fast and the practice of mortification are intended to purify our senses, and to fasten our body to the cross of Christ with the nails of corporal penance. The catechetical teaching which is given to us with greater frequency during Lent aims at purifying the soul with the eternal truth, as a remedy against that culpable obscuring of our spiritual faculties which is an effect of original sin.

The Lenten cycle sets our feet on the road to Calvary ; but, in order that we may be able to have our share in the merits of the redemption, it is necessary for us to unite ourselves to our divine Lord crucified, or to use St Paul's vigorous words, it is necessary that each of us, living once more the sacred Passion—*Fac tit portem Christi mortem,* so sings the Church —should add his own part—that is, his personal co-operation, as much as is wanting to the Passion of Christ.

After Lent comes Easter, the rugged and definite passage from the sensuous life to the dying to sin and the devil, in order to rise again with Christ to a new life, a life altogether divine. *Quod autem vivit, vivit Deo.* It is in the paschal feast that the realization of the Christian life develops and appears to us no longer in its sorrowful negative aspect of renunciation and penance, but in the abundance of its actual possessions. *Si consurrexistis cum Christo, quae sursum sunt quaerite, quae sursum sunt sapite.*

The change has been a great gain. The little withered branch of wild olive has been cut away from the sapling which had taken root on the arid rock, and has been grafted instead on to the evergreen tree of the dying Christ—the striking imagery is that of St Paul—so that it may now live through his life-giving death. The paschal sacrifice expiates the sin of the human race and reconciles it anew to God, who, being appeased, raises it once more for Christ's sake to the dignity of the divine Sonship, and as sons admits all men to share his secrets and his treasures.

If the fifty days of which the paschal cycle is composed may be compared to what in the Spiritual Exercises is termed the Illuminative Way, the time of Pentecost has a strong analogy with the Unitive Way. Since you are become his children—the Apostle tells us—God has infused into you and has communicated to you the Spirit of his own Son, whence it is through him that you exclaim: *Abba,* Father. This Spirit, your Comforter and Advocate, who in your name pleads your cause before the Lord, is he whom the Father has granted to you as a gift, that he may be to you a pledge of your adoption

as his sons and heirs. Further, as the spirit of a man alone can penetrate the recesses of the human heart, so God, in order to manifest to us, as to his children, his hidden secrets, has communicated to us his own Spirit, who shall initiate us into the perfect knowledge of the fulness of truth.

Now at length, after Pentecost, the work of the regeneration of the human race has reached its highest point. Christ and the Paraclete live and dwell within the hearts of the faithful, who are thus able to render to the august Triad that perfect adoration in spirit and in truth which alone the Father desires. This is the profound significance of the feast of the most holy Trinity which closes the Octave of Pentecost, and begins the cycle of the twenty-four weeks or so which elapse between Trinity Sunday and Advent. This long cycle, which comprises nearly half the liturgical year, represents the daily history of the Church throughout the ages, a history which begins with the first Christian Pentecost, celebrated by the Apostles in the Upper Room, and which comes to a close with the second *parousia* of Christ, as Judge, in his second Advent at the end of the world. This is the inner meaning of the two Gospel passages concerning the end of the world and the appearance of the divine Judge which the Liturgy causes to be read on the last Sunday after Pentecost and on the first Sunday in Advent.

The character of this Liturgy, which embraces fully two seasons of the year, is extremely complex, and is a striking image of the life itself of the Church. Unceasingly attacked by enemies, yet always prevailing, she implores the divine aid against them, but at the same time she sings the hymn of victory. Making herself one with the frail sons of Eve, she sometimes utters groans of contrition, expressive of the sorrow which fills her at the sight of the sins of her people, but at the same time she proclaims aloud her own undefiled sanctity, which cannot be obscured by human malice.

The Church, one, holy, catholic, and apostolic in her being and in her life, magnificently expresses these marks in her Liturgy, especially during the cycle of the Sundays after Pentecost, in which, through the reading of the Epistles of the Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, we experience over again their preaching and realize that the edifice of our faith rests on that one prophetic and apostolic foundation upon which Christ has built his Church. Those pages tell of Catholic unity, of the sacred hierarchy, of the duties of the faithful towards lawful authority, of the social ties which bind Christians to their family and to society, of the persecution of Nero, of the famine in Palestine, and of the charitable contributions made among the Greeks. The story of these first twenty years, which constitute the golden age of the

Catholic Church, contains also the forecast of that which the life of Christ's flock was to be in the ages to come.

We have only sketched out the principal features which give to the sacred Liturgy its character of absolute unity, and which, like a magnificent christological cycle, make in the course of the entire year a wonderful epic poem representative of the whole of our Christian polity.

To this long cycle of fifty-two weeks, which contains the vivid and dramatic unfolding of the whole Christian catechism, it is as well to add that other short cycle which, during the course of each week, celebrates the divine masterpiece of the six days of the Creation and draws a parallel between them and the acts of grace in the regeneration of the world through the blood of the Saviour.

St Ambrose has adapted his theological talent to the harp of the Christian muse, and in the vesper hymns appointed for each day of the week he presents to us such an example of heavenly music that we can easily understand the tears which Augustine shed, when in the first days of his conversion he listened to the Ambrosian hymns being sung by the people at Milan.

The weeks of the ecclesiastical year form, therefore, a compact and intimately connected christological cycle, which exalts the divine working in the regeneration of the world in the fulness of time. Each period of seven days in this cycle constitutes in its turn another, which has for its object the creation of the world. There remains lastly a daily cycle, which, divided into seven periods, or, as the Breviary calls them, canonical hours, especially commemorates each day the mysteries of the Passion and death of our Saviour. This last daily cycle, which is the basis of the other two cycles, forms in its turn the setting, as it were, of the eucharistie sacrifice which is daily offered up to God as the act of perfect worship in spirit and in truth which redeemed humanity offers to the ever-blessed Trinity.

Such, rapidly sketched, is the scheme, or, as we might call it, the framework of ancient ecclesiastical prayer. It is easy to see that by reason of the connection and linking together of each of its parts, the whole constituted a regular system which did not merely aim at praising God in any kind of manner, as in more recent times, but sought also to train the Christian mind. This solid catechetical foundation was one of the designs which the Popes had more especially in view, and to which they subordinated, so to speak, all the ceremonies of worship. The architecture, the decoration, the very paintings of the house of God, were all to be directed to the same end, with the result that in olden times art, eloquence, rites, prayers, and sacraments were not just so

many separate elements of worship, but each and all formed part of this vast catechetical system, by means of which was carried on the education of the Christian people.

When we read in the Breviary the Homilies 'vhich the Popes formerly preached to the faithful in the churches, we wonder how the populace could have had at that time so much knowledge of religion as to be able to understand those discourses which nowadays many priests sometimes find difficulty in comprehending. This deterioration is, however, more recent than might be supposed. In Italy, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Tuscan and Umbrian corporations, the arts and trades guilds in their statutes, and in the very decorations of their oratories and their banners, give evidence of a catechetical and scriptural culture which greatly surprises us in these modern times.

To-day many persons consider themselves to be practising Catholics merely because they read certain pious books of devotion, whilst they hardly know how to repeat the "Act of Contrition," whereas in the time of our grandfathers popular devotion, promoted chiefly by the great Mendicant Orders whose spirituality was based on choral prayer, drew its inspiration directly from the Liturgy, and found delight in the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, the Office of the Dead, the Seven Penitential Psalms, etc., thus participating· in the piety of the Church and coming into closer contact with its spirit of devotion. This contact has of late years become regrettably weakened, though certainly not through the fault of Mother Church, so that it has been possible for some persons to entertain the idea of a twofold form of devotion, the one liturgical for the use of the priest, as he recites the Mass in a low voice, and the other for the use of the faithful who are praying privately on their own account.

What has been the outcome of this? The marvellous unity of faith and prayer, of doctrine and Christian art, of the Catholic creed and social life which in earlier times formed the natural atmosphere in which the faithful were trained in the knowledge of their religion and which formed, as it were, a grand poem representing the Gospel of life, has been gradually crumbling away, so that in the minds of some present-day Catholics we find a multitude of isolated acts of devotion which have no real system nor any active synthesis. Consequently, resultant therefrom, are many irregular conciliations and many incongruous ideas, which have as their foundation a distressing ignorance of Christian doctrine, even in those who wish to be regarded as practising Catholics, but who would more correctly be styled simply pietists.

The cause of this lamentable decline in spirituality in the

case of many persons may perhaps be attributed in part to the shortcomings of our present system of catechetical instruction, which constitutes a separate rule of its own, quite distinct both from religious art and from the ordered prayers of the Church, whilst in our forefathers' days the whole of their liturgical life was essentially a training in religious knowledge. They learnt their catechism at the knees of Mother Church in such a way that they exemplified in their own lives the plenitude of her teaching, just as a child learns his mother-tongue without the need of any master, simply because in his own home he hears no other. If, on the other hand, as was the case with St Augustine when studying Greek, we have to learn a language wholly unconnected with our daily life, it becomes far more difficult, and we are never very successful, because, after all, it is not our own tongue.

The clergy, and especially the Sovereign Pontiffs, have quite recently dwelt much upon this desirable return to the ancient traditions of the Church, urging a closer adherence of Christian piety to its genuine liturgical form, and especially a more active participation of the people in its sacred rites. When the supreme authority has spoken, it is no longer permissible for any son of the Church to hesitate, to cavil, or to argue further regarding the matter. The lofty aim of this magnificent liturgical reawakening, which, with the blessing of the Bishops and of the Popes, is already making itself felt in many dioceses in Italy and elsewhere, is not indeed to oppose one form of piety to another, as though the devotion of the Catholic people in these days contained something which in itself is reprehensible, but merely to intensify that devotion, to raise it up yet more and to bring it into still closer contact with the highest degree of ecclesiastical pietv —namely, that which is comprised in the divine Liturgy of our *Ecclesia Mater.*

Revertimini ad fontes sancti Gregorii, Charlemagne is related to have said to his choirmasters when he was told that the traditional church music in France had changed once more. We might well say the same now. Let us learn from the experience of the Popes, and let us return to that system of catechetical instruction which in three centuries converted the pagan world to Christianity, and built up on the ruins of Greco-Roman civilization that more glorious edifice of the Catholic Church. Let us no longer isolate the numerous manifestations of the spiritual life which must be one, holy, and catholic ; but instead let us bring them together, each in its own place, into a compact synthesis, a real system, which shall definitely reflect this perfect unity, this transcendent sanctity and this truly Catholic charity.

In educating our people let us beware of making a misuse of that most dangerous and at the same time most indefinable of the forces of human nature, that medley of influences which we call the heart. Sentiment is a blind and variable faculty, on which it is impossible to reckon with certainty.

Let us take man as he is, with his senses, heart, imagination and mind, and let us raise his whole being up to God. In the first place let us give our attention to the educating of the pilot of this ship, the captain of this company, which is his reason. We cannot reach all these faculties of man by the same road. The senses are influenced by beauty, the heart by goodness, the intellect by truth. Each one must be approached in a different manner, but let us reverence at the same time the unity of the human being, as that of God and of religion which reveals him to us.

One only God, one only Church, one only form of Catholic piety, one complete whole, but with many sides; like a complex but closely connected organism, or rather, like a harmony produced by an infinity of sounds. We know only one *devotio* which fulfils all these conditions and blends in one harmony theology, art, architecture, music, all that is most true, most beautiful, and most worthy in this poor world : in a word, that which we have from the first called in the fullest significance of the word—" Catholic Liturgy "

SANCTAE ROMANAE ECCLESIAE FERIALE

N.B.—The three columns of the *Feriale* show as follows :

The ist, marked A, the primitive *Feriale* contained in the Philocalian Calendar and in the Sacramentaries.

The 2nd, marked B, gives the medieval feasts noted in the liturgical books of the eleventh century.

The 3rd, marked C, indicates the modern feasts inserted in the Roman Missal since the thirteenth century.

SANCTAE ROMANAE

		Menso A
29	hi Kalendas Decembres	Saturnini in Thrasonis
30	Pridie	Andreae Apostoli

		Menso
1	Kalendis	
2	iv Nonas	
3	HI	
4	Pridie	
5	Nonis	
6	νπι Idus	
7	νπ	
8	vi	Eutychiani ep. in Callisti
9	v	
x0	IV	
xI	III	
12	Pridie	Luciae v. m.
13	Idibus	Aristonis in Portum
14	xix Kalendas lanuarias	
15	XVIII	
16	XVII	
17	XVI	
x8	xv	
19	XIV	
20	XIII	
21	XII	Thomae Ap
22	XI	
a3	X	
24	IX	Tovini et Pastoris. Eugcniae Virg.
25	VIII	m., Anastasiae. Nativit. Christi
26	VII	Stephani m.
27	VI	Iohannis ap.
28	V	Innocentium.
29	IV	
30	III	
3x	Pridie Kalendas	Sylvestri ep. in *Priscillae*. In coemet, lordanorum, Donatae, Paulinae, Rusticianae, Hilariae, Saturninae, Serotinae, Nominandae

		Mense
1	Kalendis	*Octav*. Dom.
2	iv Nonas	
3	ni	
4	Pridie	
5	Nonis	
6	vniIdui	Epiphan. Dili.
7	νπ	
8	vi	
9	v	

ECCLESIAE FERIALE

Novembris

Vigil. S. Andreae in Basilic. Bassi in Exquiliis — Iunii

Decembria

Barbarae v. m.
Sahbae in Cella Nova.
Nicolai ep.
Ambrosi ep.

Vibianae v. m.
Francisci Xaverii
Petri Chrysologi ep.

Vigil. I
Immacul. Concept B. M. V.

Damasi pap. in Callisti

S. Melchiadis pap. m.

Octav. Imm. Concept. B. M. V.
Eusebii ep.

Vigil. S. Thomae Ap.

Thomae ep. m.

Januario

Circumcisio D. N. I. C.

SS. Nominis Iesu.

Telesphori pap.

S. Familiae Jesu, Mariae, Joseph.

The

>3 Idibus
xnc Kalendas Februarias
15 xvui
Jts xv
l9 Xiv
30 xin
3* Xli

26 VII
27 VI
28 V
29 IV
30 III
31 Pridie Calendas Februarias

1 Kalendis
2 iv Nonas
3 «I
4 Pridie
5 Nonis
6 vni Idus
7 vu
8 vi

10 IV
11 III
12 Prie
13 Idibus
14 xvi Calendas Marfias
15 xv
16 xiv
17 XIII
18 XU
*9
20
21 IX
V II
V II

28 Pridi Kalendas Martias

Mi/tiadis nn
PP' 'n CaUisti

Pelicis in Pincis.

Marcelli pap. in prisciUa

Sebastiani in. in Catacumbis,
biani ep. in Callisti
Agnetis v. ni. I.
Vincentii m. An agello
ad aquas Salvias.

Agoae de ïv3i

Solernnitas S. Mariae.

Agathae v. ni. ad Catacumb.

Va/eotini m

Mense

Fa-

Monachi a.

Mense

Januario *(continued)*

B	C
	Hygini pap.
	Hylarii ep.
	Pauli heremit. Mauri Abb.
	Antonii abb.
Priscae v. m.	Cathedra S. Petri Romae.
Marii, Marthae, Audifacis et Abacum.	Canuti mart.
Emerentianetis v. m.	Raymundi conf.
	Timothei ep.
Conversio S. Pauli Apost.	
S. Policarpi ep. m.	
S. Iohannis Chrisost. ep.	
	Francisci Salesii ep.
SS. Cyri et Iohannis Mm.	Martinae Mart.
	Petri Nolasco conf.

Februario

	Ignatii ep. m.
Blasii ep. m.	
	Andreae Corsici ep.
Dorotheae v. m.	Titi ep.
	Romualdi Abb.
	Iohannis de Matha conf.
Apolloniae virg. m.	
Scholasticae virg.	Cyrilli ep. Alex. c.
	Apparit. B. M. V.
	SS. VII Fundat. O. Servorum. B. M. V.
	Faustini et Iovitae Mm.
	Simeonis ep. m.
Concordiae, ad sanctum Laurentium	Petri Damiani ep. Vigil. S. Mattiae Ap.
	S. Mattiae Ap.

THE FEASTS OF THE SAINTS DURING THE CHRISTMAS CYCLE

FEASTS IN NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 29

St Saturninus, Martyr

Station at the Basilica of St Saturninus in the Cemetery of Thraso on the Via Salaria Nova.

IN a certain sense a twofold liturgy was celebrated today at Rome; for, besides the night Mass of St Andrew, there was also held in the cemetery of Thraso on the Via Salaria Nova the festival station of St Saturninus. The first mention of this feast is found in the Philocalian Calendar: *III Kai. dec. Saturnini in Thrasonis.*

According to the *Gesta Marcelli,* St Saturninus, *vir senex,* was first condemned during the Diocietian persecution to hard labour in conveying sand from the pits to the baths which that Emperor was then building in Rome, but as the patience, the spirit of prayer, and the eloquent words of the Martyr were converting many to the Faith, he was taken by order of the prefect of the city to the Via Nomentana, where he was decapitated together with the deacon Sisinnius. A devout Christian, Thraso by name, and a priest called John buried the bodies in a certain property on the Via Salaria Nova, where in the first years of the Peace a basilica was built dedicated to Saturninus. This church, successively restored by Felix IV, Adrian I, and Gregory IV (827-44), remained standing until the sixteenth century. It was here, on this day, that a eucharistie synaxis was held which we find mentioned in the Gelasian Sacramentary.

Another church arose in honour of St Saturninus on some waste land on the Quirinal, and records of it still exist dating back to the eleventh century. It was given over to the care oi the monks of the Abbey of St Paul, and Sixtus IV (1471-84), finding it in bad repair, restored it. It was pulled down under Paul V (1605-21), in order to facilitate the levelling of the ground which was being carried out in front of the papal palace on the Quirinal Hill.

The feast of St Saturninus is certainly noted for to-day in the Gelasian Sacramentary; but the intention of the Mass was a collective one, since it was offered on behalf of almost all the martyrs who were buried in that part of the Via Salaria, and who are mentioned in the *Gesta Marcelli:* Saturninus, Chrysanthus, Daria, Maurus, Papias, Sisinnius and others. Now, however, the Mass of St Saturninus is that of the Common of Martyrs, while the Collects are proper and have reference exclusively to him.

The following beautiful hymn was inscribed by Pope Damasus, the poet of the Roman martyrs, on the tomb of St Saturninus on the Via Salaria Nova :

INCOLA · NVNC · CHRISTI · FVERAT · QVI · CARTHAGINIS · ANTE
TEMPORE · QVO · GLADIVS · SECVIT · PIA · VISCERA · MATRIS
SANGVINE · MVTAVIT · PATRIAM · NOMENQVE · GENVSQVE
ROMANVM · CIVEM · SANCTORVM · FECIT · ORIGO
MIRA · FIDES ı RERVM · DOCVIT · POST · EXITVS · INGENS
CVM · LACERAT · PIA · MEMBRA · FREMIT · GRATIANVS · VT · HOSTIS
POSTEAQVAM · FELLIS - VOMVIT · CONCEPTA · VENENA
COGERE · NON · POTVIT · CHRISTVM · TE · SANCTE · NEGARE
IPSE · TVIS · PRECIBVS · MERVIT · CONFESSVS · ABIRE
SVPPLICIS · HAEC · DAMASI · VOX · EST · VENERARE · SEPVLCHRVM
SOLVERE · VOTA · LICET · CASTASQVE · EFFVNDERE · PRECES
SANCTI · SATVRNINI · TVMVLVS · QVÏA · MARTYRIS · HIC · EST
SATVRNINE · TIBI · MARTYR · MEA · VOTA · REPENDO

" Indweller of Christ, he who was erstwhile of Carthage, at the time when a sword pierced the breast of the tender mother,ı by the shedding of his blood changed his country, his name, and his race, and, entering among the saints, became a Roman citizen. His intrepid death testified to his intrepid faith. The persecutor, Gratian, trembles with rage whilst he rends thy holy limbs on the rack; but, though he vents his poisonous gall upon thee, yet he could not, O saint, induce thee to deny Christ ; rather through thy prayers did he also merit to be a confessor of the Faith before he died. That this sepulchre may be held in honour is the earnest prayer of Damasus. May vows be paid here, and devout prayers offered, for this is the tomb of Saturninus the martyr. O martyr Saturninus, I redeem my vows to thee !"

The Oratory of St Saturninus, restored formerly by Pope Felix IV (526-30), was used for public worship until the time of Nicholas IV (1288-92). The relics of the martyr were

ı *i.e.,* the Church, then persecuted throughout the Roman Empire.

transferred at a date unknown to the Title of Bisante, on the Caelian Hill.

The Introit is derived from Psalm lxiii. The just man possesses even in the midst of the conflict an imperturbable joy in the depth of his heart, a joy which springs from the purity of his conscience, and which is nourished by his hope in the Lord. The success and triumph of the wicked can only be momentary; the enduring victory is with the saints.

In the Collect we invoke the merits of the martyr, so that God may help our manifold weaknesses. " O God, who dost suffer us to rejoice in the birthday of thy blessed martyr Saturninus, grant that we may be helped by his merits. Through our Lord."

The Lesson consists of various extracts from the second Epistle of St Paul to Timothy (ii, 8-10, and iii, 10-12). The Apostle, already nearing his martyrdom, reminds his beloved disciple, who was as firm in the Faith as in the labours endured in spreading it, that the Gospel preached by him was in substance none other than the announcement of Christ as the Messias, who had died and was risen again for the salvation of the world. St Paul, being then in fetters, feels that he is guilty of no other crime than this—*quasi male operans*—that is, of having preached the salvation of the world through faith in Jesus Christ. Such was his noble crime—the proclaiming Jesus to be the Saviour of the world. This same crime shall be also imputed to all the martyrs who come after him, *quasi male operans.* The Apostle, when writing to Timothy, is bound with chains, but *verbum Dei,* he says, *non est alligatum.* This same Word of liberty and of truth shall indeed triumph over all its adversaries.

The Gradual is from Psalm xxxvi, and points out the different value which the sorrows and ills of this present life assume for the just man—for him, that is, whose faith becomes operative through charity—and for the unbeliever. The just man entrusts himself to God, for the honour of whose name he faces the anger of the tyrant. His head may fall under the blow of the axe, but that is merely an apparent and visible death, since the martyr who falls asleep in the sleep of death in reality yields himself to the arms of God, who, in the words of holy Scripture, nourishes his soul with the antidote of immortality. How sweet, then, must be this falling asleep in the midst of fierce executioners, to awaken an instant later in Paradise in the arms of the Lord.

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from the Gospel of St John (viii, 12). He who follows me, says Christ, on the road to Calvary shall not be troubled by the darkness of the dungeon, or by the black clouds of the wrath of the

persecutors. The Lord will shine like a brilliant star before his spirit : this is the light of truth, which will guide him whithersoever he goes, and will enable him to say as did the martyr Lawrence in his passion : *Mea nox obscurum non habet, sed omnia in luce clarescunt.* This inner and inextinguishable light is holy faith.

The Gospel extract in the Würzburg Capitulary was taken from St Mark (xiii, 5-13), but in the present Missal it comes from St Matthew (x, 26-32). Jesus wills that, when the time shall have come to proclaim the Gospel to all the world—when, that is, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, Israel shall have repudiated its own Messianic inheritance—the disciples shall preach openly and in all places that word of faith, which is to save the world. The proclamation of this life-giving message will cause the death of the evangelizers, as it has already caused the death of the Master; but they shall not suffer loss, and their martyrdom shall be like a grain of corn which, lying hidden in the earth, shall bring forth fruit a hundredfold. A hundredfold is the full and perfect measure fitting to the martyrs, for by their death they not only acquire a special right to participate with Christ in the glories of his resurrection, but even here on earth their blood shed in witnessing to the truth becomes for the Church a strong argument in favour of the divine nature of the Faith ; thus, as Tertullian says, the blood of the martyrs is ever a fruitful seed bringing forth new Christians.

The Offertory is from Psalm xx. Thou, O Lord, hast set a crown of precious stones on the head of this man condemned and rejected from all human society. Whilst, standing before his judges, he listened to the sentence of death pronounced upon him, he reflected that they were casting him from out of the number of the living, not altogether on his own account, but because it was through him that they wished to drive out thee whom the world hates. Then he lifted up his heart, realizing that it was thou who didst suffer in him, since he suffered for thee. So he asked life of thee, as a favour, not indeed that mortal life which is only too much in the power of man, and which the tyrant was about to take from him. He had no love for this wretched and transient life, for, prodigal of his blood, he gave it voluntarily for thee. He asked, instead, for the true life, for participation in thy resurrection, for the unending life of which thou art the source, for the life of light, of grace, and of joy. Thou hast given it to him, and he who was once condemned to death and slain, now triumphs with thee and judges those who persecuted him.

In the Secret we pray God to sanctify our sacrifice, and to give us the necessary dispositions of faith and love, so

that the eucharistie oblation, holy in itself, indeed the very fount of all holiness, may also be the cause of holiness in those who offer it, and by the intercession of the martyr, may obtain for us the divine mercy.

Here follow the words of this striking prayer: " Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings devoted to thee ; and by the intercession of blessed Saturninus thy martyr, look down mercifully upon us. Through our Lord."

The Communion, contrary to the classic rule, is derived from the Gospel of St John (xii, 26) : " If any man minister to me," said Jesus, " let him follow me through the labours and sufferings of this world ; and as the Son of Man would not enter into the possession of his own glory except by the way of the cross, so shall the servant also go by no other path to attain the bliss which his Master has prepared for him."

The Post-Communion expresses in general terms the hope that the intercession of the martyrs may render our Communion truly fruitful. The Liturgy here establishes an important link between the sacrifice of Christ our Redeemer, that sacrifice which the martyrs offered to him by the shedding of their blood for his sake, and finally our own twofold sacrifice—namely, that of the holy Eucharist and that of our *devotio,* which implies the consecration of our whole being and our entire life of God. These several offerings are intimately joined together and made one upon the sacred altar, because in reality they form but one sacrifice, that of Jesus himself ; of Jesus as the head of the Church, and of Jesus in his mystical members. Let us beware of separating that which God has joined together : let our oblation be one with that of Jesus and of the martyrs, since our Christian life must be the continuation of their confession of the Faith, and of their martyrdom.

We give here the text of the eucharistie prayer of thanksgiving : ""May the receiving of thy sacrament sanctify us, we beseech thee, O Lord ; and by the intercession of thy saints render us acceptable to thee. Through our Lord."

Such indeed is the glory of Christ ! Neither age nor sex has failed to offer him the palm and the crown, so that none of us can refuse to follow him, bearing our own cross, on the pretext that the way is too hard. Even a failing old man like Saturninus found strength and courage in his faith to enable him to overcome the wickedness of Maximian when suffering imprisonment, penal servitude, and finally death by the sword of the executioner. Why, then, cannot wc bear that which so many before us have borne? *Cur non poteris quod isti et istae?*

THE NIGHT PRECEDING NOVEMBER 30

ViGiLiARY Mass of St Andrew the Apostle

Slation at. the Basilica of St Andrew "Kata Barbara Patricia " on the Esquiline.

On this night the station, in all probability, took place on the Esquiline, in the ancient hall of Junius Bassus, dedicated to St Andrew by Pope Simplicius (467-83).

A medieval liturgical tradition makes the yearly ecclesiastical cycle to begin with the First Sunday in Advent instead of with Christmas Eve, as in the more ancient Roman Sacramentaries. Finally, Rome also adopted this later computation ; consequently, the first feast we find mentioned in the present Missal is that of St Andrew, as being the nearest to the beginning of Advent.

This date of November 30 is that of the death of the Apostle, as we see from his *Passio,* whereas that of February 2, as noted in the Sacramentary of St Jerome, refers to his evangelical ministry at Patras : *Ordinatio episcopatus sancti Andreae in Patras.*

There developed in Rome an intense devotion to St Andrew, which was first introduced by Pope Simplicius, but which St Gregory the Great helped later on to render still more popular, when, on the death of of his father, he turned his own house *ad clivum Scauri,* above the Via Appia, into a monastery dedicated to St Andrew. It is very probable that on his return from his mission to Constantinople as Papal *apocrisarius,* St Gregory, according to tradition, enriched his monastic basilica with a special relic of its titular saint. What, however, is certain is that in the seventh century the Apostle was venerated in the monastery *ad clivum Scauri*—where he worked frequent miracles—in preference to his own sanctuary on the Esquiline. In his letters, St Gregory took pleasure in relating these miracles to his far-off correspondents and benefactors of the monastery, inciting them to ever greater devotion towards the abbey he had founded.

The fact that St Andrew was the brother of St Peter caused Pope Symmachus (498-514) to build an oratory dedicated to him, near the Vatican Basilica. Thus it happened that, in the early Middle Ages, the devout pilgrims who made their way to Rome from the most distant parts of the world, after having prostrated themselves before the tomb of St Peter, used to go on to pay homage to him also, who was glorified in the Roman Liturgy as :

Germanus Petri et tn passione socius.

Other basilicas were built in honour of the saint in various

parts of the city, so that in the Middle Ages at least forty churches dedicated to him existed in Rome. These local circumstances contributed greatly to the solemnity with which the feast of St Andrew was celebrated in the capital of the Christian world.

From the fourth century onward the feast was preceded by a fast and a solemn night vigil, indeed the Leonine Sacramentary contains in addition to the vigiliary Mass three other masses in honour of St Andrew, in which the idea is continually dwelt upon that, besides being the brother of St Peter, the saint also shared with him the glory of having died upon a cross. Probably these Leonine Masses were either used as alternative masses, or were destined for the different synaxes which were then celebrated in the various Roman sanctuaries dedicated to St Andrew.

The most ancient *liber conies* of Rome contained in the Würzburg Codex, already mentioned, assigns a double lesson to the Mass of the vigil and to that of the festival of the Apostle, just as on the most solemn feasts of the year. The Gregorian Sacramentary likewise contains the Collects for Matins and Vespers in the Office of the saint, which gives us reason to believe that this feast was reckoned in Rome amongst the most important in the liturgical cycle.

According to the *Ordo Romanus* of Benedict the Canon in the twelfth century, the Pope went in the afternoon of the vigil of St Andrew to the Vatican with all his court and there officiated at Vespers and the night Office in the oratory' of the saint, exactly as on the vigil of St Peter. The morning Office at dawn was held as usual *ad fratrem ejus*—that is, at the tomb of St Peter—but the stational Mass was celebrated at the altar of St Andrew.[1] The basilica was magnificently illuminated, and when the Mass was over the prefect of the city invited the Pope and the whole Curia to a solemn banquet.

The vigiliary Mass of St Andrew, such as it has been handed down to us in the Sacramentaries of the eighth century', appears as a modified form of the ancient Roman rite of the *pannuchis*. Instead of the original twelve Lessons immediately followed by the consecratory anaphora which was recited at the break of day, we here have merely the usual type of Roman Mass, with the customary three Lessons from the Old and the New Testament. When was this vigiliary Mass celebrated? Was it, perhaps, on the morning of the feast of St Andrew, after the usual singing of the morning Office? It is probable that this was so before the seventh century, since later on, in the Sacramentaries which carry on the tradition of Adrian I, this vigiliary Mass

1 Migne, *Patrol. Lal.* LXXVIII, 1053-54.

precedes, as now, the Vesper Offices with which the feast of the Apostle begins.

The Antiphon for the Introit is drawn from that passage of the Gospel of St Matthew, which will be sung to-morrow at High Mass. The Roman Liturgy draws special attention on this night to the indissoluble bond which unites the two fishermen of the Lake of Genesareth. Peter and Andrew, bound together by the closest ties of blood, were associated by Jesus in the glory of the apostolic mission, and likewise in one and the same triumphal confession of the Faith, which they sealed with their death upon the cross, for not even death itself could separate the two brothers.

The Vatican Basilica which so carefully preserves the tomb of the first Vicar of Christ, also guards the sacred head of St Andrew the Apostle. This holy relic was once venerated at Byzantium, but when the Eastern capital fell into the hands of Mahomet II, this precious treasure was carried in safety to Rome by Cardinal Bessarione. Pius II (1458-64), escorted by a splendid retinue of cardinals and prelates, went as far as the Milvian Bridge to meet the former Greek Bishop of Nicæa who bore the holy relic. From there the triumphal procession moved across the *prata Neroniana* to the great temple of Christianity, where the head of St Andrew is now kept in a special shrine built in the top of one of the four huge piers that support the dome.

A little oratory on the Via Flaminia dedicated to St Andrew still marks the precise spot where Pius II received the head of the Apostle from the hands of the Cardinal. Here was Eastern Catholicism coming to take refuge at Rome, so as not to fall a victim to schism and to the Crescent of Mahomet.

Introit (Matt, iv, 18) : " The Lord saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, by the seaside of Galilee, and he called them : Come ye after me ; I will make you to be fishers of men." Psalm xviii : " The heavens show forth the glory of God : and the firmament declareth the works of his hands, y. Glory."

In the Collect we implore the intercession of the Apostle, that, being delivered from sin, we may escape all the wiles of the enemy.

" We beseech thee, Almighty God, that blessed Andrew thy Apostle, to whose festival we look forward, may implore thy help for us; that being absolved from our sins, we may also be delivered from all dangers. Through our Lord."

In the ancient lists of Lessons the vigil of St Andrew always has two : one from the Old Testament, derived from the Book of Ecclesiasticus xxxi but now allotted to the

Mass for a simple confessor; the other, from the New Testament, is the introduction of St Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. In later times this ancient custom of the double Lessons disappeared, and, in the present Missal, the Lesson of the vigil is the one common to all the vigils of the Apostles. The passage from Ecclesiasticus is that in which the praises of Isaac, Moses, and Aaron are set forth. This threefold encomium is wonderfully applicable to St Andrew. As Isaac typified the heir of the Messianic promises made to Abraham, so the holy Apostles represent the first-fruits of the Spirit, which, from Jesus Christ, the mystical head, fill the whole body of the Church. Moses and Aaron are types of the two-fold authority, the legislative or judicial, and the pontifical, with which the Twelve were invested.

Lesson (Ecclus. xliv, 25-27; xlv, 2-4 and 6-9): "The blessing of the Lord was upon the head of the just man. Therefore the Lord gave him an inheritance, and divided him his portion in twelve tribes; and he found grace in the eyes of all flesh. He magnified him in the fear of his enemies, and with his words he made prodigies to cease. He glorified him in the sight of kings, and gave him commandments in the sight of his people, and showed him his glory. He sanctified him in his faith and meekness, and chose him out of all flesh. And he gave him commandments before his face, and a law of life and instruction: and he exalted him. He made an everlasting covenant with him, and girded him about with a girdle of justice: and the Lord crowned him with a crown of glory."

In vigiliary Masses neither the Tract nor the alleluiatic verse is sung, such melodies being originally reserved exclusively for Sunday and festival Masses. Instead, the Gradual (Psalm cxxxviii, 17, 18) is said. As a matter of fact, these verses in the original text have reference to the "secret counsels" of God, and have no connection with the Apostles; but as in the Latin version the word "friends" has taken the place of "secret counsels," this portion of the Psalm has been chosen from early times to celebrate the glories of our Saviour's first disciples.

Gradual: "Thy secret counsels [*Vulg.* friends], O God, are made exceedingly honourable: their principality is exceedingly strengthened, y. I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand."

The Gospel (John i, 35-51) relates the calling of Andrew and of the first followers of Christ to be apostles. Nathanael, who is here mentioned, is most probably Bartholomew whom Jesus converted to the Faith by revealing to him the hidden desires of his heart. The circumstance alluded to by our Lord: *cum esses sub ficu,* has remained hidden from all

interpreters. Did Jesus perhaps refer to some fervent prayer or ardent longing for the Messias expressed by Nathanael whilst, in the solitude of the country, he conversed with God under the shade of a fig-tree?

Be this as it may, that which is clearly shown by the Gospel narrative is the single-mindedness of those who were first called by our Saviour to the apostolate, their spontaneity in responding to the call, and the earnestness of their resolve. They are not mere enthusiasts allowing themselves to be carried away by the popular favour which already surrounds the young Rabbi of Nazareth. They are men who use their reason, who raise objections, who desire proof of the divine nature of his mission. At length they yield to the truth and to the evidence of the signs by which Jesus proved his own divinity ; they believe, and that first act of faith definitely decides the whole course of their after life, without hesitation, without regret. They believe, and their apostolic mission consists simply in bearing witness to their faith before the whole world.

The Offertory comes from Psalm viii : Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour ; and hast set him over the works of thy hands, O Lord."

This truly is the prerogative of Christ, the first-born of creation, but it is suitably applied to the Apostles also, as being the pillars which support the Church.

In the Secret we ask to be delivered from sin by the merits of St Andrew : " We bring unto thee, O Lord, an offering to be consecrated, by which commemorating the solemnity of blessed Andrew thy apostle, we implore also the purification of our minds. Through our Lord."

The Gregorian Sacramentary gives to this night the following preface . . . *aeterne Deus ; et majestatem tuam supplici-ter adorare, ut qui beati Andreae apostoli festum solemnibus jejuniis et devotis praevenimus officiis, illius apud majestatem tuam et adjuvemur meritis, et instruamur exemplis, per Christum*. . . .

The verse for the Communion is from the Gospel of St John read to-day: ''Andrew saith to Simon his brother: We have found the Messias, who is called Christ ; and he brought him to Jesus."

St Andrew begins his apostolate without delay, and leads his brother Simon to Jesus. We, too, must do likewise. The love which binds us to our neighbour calls upon us to procure for him the divine good, the only true and desirable good.

In the Post-Communion we beg earnestly for the remedial effects of the holy Eucharist, so that it may become in us an antidote against the deadly *virus* which, like some hereditary

disease, contaminates the blood of all the wretched sons of Adam.

" Having· received thy sacraments, O Lord, we humbly beseech thee that by the intercession of blessed Andrew thy Apostle, what we do in honour of his sufferings may avail to heal us. Through our Lord."

St Andrew is the fervent exponent and apostle of the teaching of the cross. In the austere school of St John the Baptist he learnt that we must all prostrate and efface ourselves before the divine Bridegroom, and that the more we efface ourselves the more will Jesus Christ be lifted up and glorified in us. There is no greater advantage to be gained in this world than to abandon and lose ourselves entirely in the infinite ocean of the love of Jesus, to the end that he may become all in all to us, and that we may find all things again in him.

NOVEMBER 30

St Andrew the Apostle

Station at the Basilica of St Andrew rf Kata Barbara Patricia" on the Esquiline.

Notwithstanding the medieval custom of celebrating the synaxis on this day in the Vatican, where the *rotunda* of Pope Symmachus dedicated to the brother of St Peter was held in great reverence, we are still of opinion that, at first, the station took place in the basilica of Junius Bassus on the Esquiline, which had formerly been dedicated by Pope Simplicius to St Andrew.

In the various Masses in honour of St Andrew which are preserved in the Leonine Sacramentary, we seem to hear an echo of the celebrity of this dedication, a celebrity to which the epigraph engraved in the apse of the building also bears witness.

HAEC · TIBI · MENS · VALILAE · DEVOVIT · PRAEDIA · CHRISTE
CVI · TESTATOR · OPES · DETVLIT · IPSE · SVAS
SIMPLICIVSQVE · PAPA · SACRIS · CAELESTIBVS · APTANS
EFFECIT · VERE · MVNERIS · ESSE · TVI
ET · QVOD · APOSTOLICI · DEESSENT · LIMINA · NOBIS
MARTYRIS · ANDREAE · NOMINE · COMPOSVIT
VTITVR · HAC · HAERES · TITVLIS · ECCLESIA · IVSTIS
SVCCEDENSQVE · DOMO · MYSTICA · IVRA · LOCAT
PLEBS · DEVOTA · VENI · PERQVE · HAEC · COMMERCIA · DISCE
TERRENO · CENSV · REGNA · SVPERNA · PETI.

We learn from this inscription that Valila, a Goth, called in other documents Flavius Theodovius, having somehow

come into possession of the ancient civil basilica, magnificently constructed by the Consul Junius Bassus (died 317), named Jesus Christ as his heir—perhaps at the suggestion of his wife, from whom the basilica took its name *Kata Barbara Patricia.* Pope Simplicius adapted the hall to its new use, and as there was at that time no church in Rome dedicated to St Andrew, he ordered that it should be named after him. It is well to remember that on March 3, 357, the body of St Andrew was translated from Patras to Constantinople, and that through the veneration of the Byzantines, the *cultus* of the *Protoclitus* from that moment spread rapidly throughout the Empire.

Unlike the Office—a compilation, perhaps Roman, of a much later date, in which the apocryphal acts of St Andrew have been somewhat freely made use of—the two Masses of the Apostle, of the vigil and of the festival, are distinguished by great dignity and elegance of expression. *Apocrypha nescit Ecclesia,* St Jerome had already said, and indeed neither the Lessons nor the Antiphons, nor the Collects in the Missal, contain any allusion to those spurious writings.

The Introit is taken from Psalm cxxxviii, of which we have already spoken in connection with the Gradual of the preceding night. "To me thy secret counsels [*Vulg.* friends], O God, are made exceedingly honourable: their principality is exceedingly strengthened. Psalm *ibid.* Lord, thou hast proved me and known me: thou hast known my sitting down, and my rising up. *J.* Glory."

This power of the divine counsels has been shown especially by the means which God adopted to bring about the conversion of the world. He desired to confound all human wisdom by making twelve poor fishermen the foundations of the Church, the fortress and stronghold of divine wisdom.

In the Collect we pray that the Apostle may continue in heaven by his prayers that ministry which he began here on earth by his preaching. "We humbly beseech thy majesty, O Lord, that as the blessed Andrew was raised up to be a preacher and ruler in thy church, so he may be our constant intercessor with thee. Through our Lord."

The Lesson from the Epistle of St Paul to the Romans, which is also appointed for to-day's feast in the *Comes* of Wiirzburg, explains the universality of the calling of the Gentiles to the Faith, and the sublimity of the Catholic apostolate, whose dominion extends to the uttermost parts of the earth. No man, however, can undertake this mission of peace and salvation on his own initiative. The Apostle is a messenger, who consequently is sent by another to bring to

us his message. Now Jesus has entrusted the apostolate exclusively to the Twelve and their successors, who alone have a right to go forth into the whole world to teach and baptize all nations.

Heretics cannot claim an equal liberty, for we might well reply to them: Jesus gave to his Apostles the whole world as a field for their labours. Who, then, are you that come so late and lay your sickle to the harvest of another? Who has sent you? With what right do you make use of the Holy Scriptures which Christ entrusted to his Church? This right of the Catholic Church has, moreover, now become prescriptive, for she exercised it long before Cerinthus or Arius, Luther or Calvin were ever heard of; there is therefore no place for you.

Lesson (Rom. x, 10-18): "Brethren: With the heart we believe unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth in him shall not be confounded. For there is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek; for the same is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? or how shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach unless they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things! But all do not obey the Gospel. For Isaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? Faith, then, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world."

The Gradual is drawn from Psalm xliv, and tells of the wonderful growth of the Church and of her glorious progeny of saints. "Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth: they shall remember thy name, O Lord. ℣. Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee: therefore shall people praise thee."

The alleluiatic verse in honour of the Apostle follows: "The Lord loved Andrew in the odour of sweetness." This is the *Christi bonus odor* spoken of by St Paul, which, whilst in heaven it draws forth the divine favours, on earth attracts souls to the Christian Faith.

The Gospel, in telling us of the calling of St Andrew to the Apostleship (Matt, iv, 18-22), teaches us also a truth of the greatest importance to the spiritual life. The entire wealth of Andrew, Peter, and John consisted in their fisherman's net, and their families were but plain and virtuous folk.

Yet the Saviour would have his Apostles wholly free, detached from all things, unfettered by ties of kindred or of purely human affections. This is the true evangelical liberty, which kindles in the heart of the apostolic worker one only love, the love of Christ, which causes him to have but one interest, the seeking of the good of souls.

This passage from St Matthew's Gospel was expounded by Gregory the Great to the people in a homily which was delivered on this day *in basilica sancti Andreae.* Which basilica was this? It is unlikely that the small round church at the Vatican is here meant, for it was incapable of holding a great concourse of people. It must, therefore, have been the other *Kata Barbara Patricia,* in which we know for certain that he once preached on the First Sunday in Advent, perhaps because it coincided with the feast of St Andrew.

The Offertory verse from Psalm cxxxviii is a repetition of that of the Introit set to another melody. "To me thy secret counsels [*Vulg.* friends], O God, are made exceedingly honourable: their principality is exceedingly strengthened." Great in truth is the power of God's counsels, for whilst the vain conceits of human wisdom very often fail, the whole world in league against God could not frustrate his designs.

The Secret in its allusion to the solemn sacrifice well recalls the circumstances in which this Mass was originally said; at the time, that is, when the Pope himself, surrounded by bishops and priests, celebrated the stational Mass of St Andrew.

"We beseech thee, O Lord, that the holy prayer of blessed Andrew thy Apostle may render our sacrifice pleasing to thee; that it may become acceptable by the merits of him in whose honour it is solemnly offered up. Through our Lord."

In the Leonine Sacramentary we find, amongst others, the following preface in honour of St Andrew: *Vere dignum . . . in festivitate praesenti, qua beati Andreae Apostoli tui venerandus sanguis effusus est. Qui gloriosi apostoli tui Petri, pariter sorte nascendi, consortio fidei, apostolicae collegio dignitatis et martyrii est claritate germanus, ut quos in hujus vitae cursu gratia tua tot vinculis pietatis obstrinxerat, similis in regno caelorum necteret et corona, per Christum . . .*

This custom of introducing into the text of the eucharistie anaphora a eulogy of the saint whose feast was being celebrated is shown to be traditional by Pope Vigilius in his well-known letter to Bishop Profuturus of Braga.

The verse for the Communion comes from to-day's Gospel: ''Come ye after me; I will make you to be fishers of men. But they immediately leaving their nets followed the Lord."

It is especially after Holy Communion that our Lord

speaks to the soul, and invites it to a more intimate and faithful following of himself. It is by no inaccessible nor untrodden path that he leads us: *Venite post me.* We must walk only where Jesus has already gone before, and where he has left his sacred footprints marked with his own blood.

In the Post-Communion we entreat the divine mercy that the eucharistie sacrifice which gives joy in heaven, where it increases the glory of the saints, may also be on earth a pledge of grace especially for us poor sinners.

" We have received divine mysteries, O Lord, rejoicing in the festival of blessed Andrew; and we beseech thee that, as they bring glory to thy saints, so they may avail us for pardon from thee. Through our Lord."

Such is the Catholic life of the Church, the true image of the ineffable life of the Blessed Trinity, which Tertullian calls the first and most ancient Church: unity in multiplicity. Multiplicity of souls, but unity of faith, of sacraments, and of the Holy Ghost, in one mystical body, that of Jesus Christ. Thus the same Sacrament which is offered on the altar, whilst it diffuses the dew of pardon, gladdens the blessed in the triumph of their glory, and is a fount of grace to the Church suffering and the Church militant. This is the inner and deeper meaning of to-day's Post-Communion prayer.

FEASTS IN DECEMBER

DECEMBER 2

St Bibiana, Virgin and Martyr *[1]

Station at her basilica near the Nyniphceum of Licinius

The basilica of this martyr was built by Pope Simplicius near the Nymphæum of Licinius Gallienus on the Esquiline, but her feast was not inserted in the Rome Calendar until the time of Urban VIII (1623-44), when her body was discovered and canonically identified. Yet we find that the memory of the saint was in great veneration in the early Middle Ages, and we know, too, that Leo II (682-3) transferred the bodies of the martyrs Simplicius, Faustinus, and Viatrix from the cemetery *ad sextum Philippi* to her church in order to increase the popular devotion to that sanctuary.

[1] The feasts marked with an asterisk (·) do not belong in any way to the original collection in the Roman Sacramentaries, which contained at first only local feasts. They are, however, given here as they now form part of the universal calendar of the Church, and are included in the Roman Missal.

A very ancient convent of nuns was attached to it, which existed down to the fifteenth century.

The Mass is that of the Common of Virgin Martyrs.

The Introit comes from Psalm cxviii. " The wicked have waited for me to destroy me; they wished to destroy first my soul and then also my body; but I remembered thy precepts and did not yield. The way by which they led me to death perhaps seemed narrow, but it is guarded by thy commandments, and has become for me a wide and open space, that of a glorious eternity."

The story of this martyr forms part of the same group as that which includes the martyrs John and Paul, Gallicanus, etc., who are said to have been put to death under Julian the Apostate, although there was not at that time any regular persecution, except in the East. It is one of the many obscure points in the Church's history, for the elucidation of which we must look to the discovery of new documents. The points which remain unquestioned are the personality of Bibiana, the very early veneration paid to her, and the story of her relics which seem to have been interred at first in the actual house of the martyr, that had been turned by Pope Simplicius into a church: *Et aliam basilicam intra urbem, juxta palatium Licinianum, beatae martyris Vibianae, ubi corpus ejus requiescit.*

The Collect is proper to the feast and was composed in the time of Urban VIII.

*' O God, the giver of all good things, who in thy servant Bibiana didst unite the flower of virginity with the palm of martyrdom; so unite our souls unto thee in the bond of charity by virtue of her intercession, that, being delivered from all dangers, we may obtain the rewards of everlasting life. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is taken from the prayer of Jesus the son of Sirach in Ecclesiasticus (li, 13-17). It is the same as that chosen for the festival station in the house of St Cecilia, but it is doubtful whether the composer of the Office of St Bibiana in the seventeenth century realized this circumstance which renders the words of holy Scripture so significant: " O Lord my God, thou hast exalted my dwelling-place upon the earth and I have prayed for death to pass away." The Lesson proceeds with words of thanksgiving to God who has heard the prayer of the martyr and has prepared the triumph of the faithful soul, in the very moment when it seemed that the pride of the persecutors must certainly prevail.

The Gradual is derived from Psalm xlv. It describes the imperturbable peace of the City of God, even when assaulted

by the enemy. This city is Jerusalem, which is here a symbol of the Church and the faithful soul.

" God will help her with his countenance : God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, y. The stream of the river maketh the city of God joyful ; the Most High hath sanctified his own tabernacle."

The Gospel from St Matthew (xiii, 44-52) is also appointed in the Capitulary of Würzburg to be read on the feasts of St Sabina, St Lucy, St Euphemia, etc. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a rich treasure hidden in a field. He who would possess it must pay the price of the field, which varies according to the fortune of each individual. He who has little, may give little; he who has more, shall give more; but each must give all that he has, for only the entire sacrifice of everything can purchase the longed-for treasure. The same is true of the pearl of great price ; he who wishes to acquire it, must sell all his substance in order to do so and will still be the gainer. The martyrs well understood the meaning of the Gospel lesson. They gave themselves entirely to God, they sacrificed all for him and, in exchange, they obtained him, who is above all other good.

The Offertory is drawn from Psalm xliv, which celebrates the nuptials of the divine Bridegroom with the Church. ''Grace is poured abroad in thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee for ever, and for ages of ages."

In the Secret we pray God to accept the sacrifice which is offered to him in memory of the martyr by whose merits we also beg for the *perpetuum subsidium,* the help, that is, of that grace which in eternity is changed into the light of glory, and which strengthens us in well-doing.

The Communion is from Psalm cxviii, the same as that from which the Introit is taken. " I have done judgement and justice, O Lord ; let not the proud calumniate me ; I was directed to all thy commandments; I have hated all wicked ways."

There is so much beauty in holiness that even the wicked are influenced by it and indirectly do homage to it, as when in condemning the martyrs to death, they did not as a rule make their profession of the Christian faith the only cause of their martyrdom, but brought false accusations and calumnies against them in order to screen their own injustice. The Jews acted in the same manner towards Christ himself, who was in truth condemned to death on account of his claim to divinity, although the accusation brought against him before the tribunal of the Roman governor was of a political nature—namely, that of sedition against the Emperor Tiberius.

The Post-Communion invokes the intercession of the

martyr that nothing may ever separate us from Christ, nor from the Communion of his Body and his Spirit.

How feeble does our virtue appear when compared to that of the martyrs! We cannot put up with any hardship; we find a thousand good reasons for not observing as we should the laws of the Church which our indolence regards as too arduous; whereas the martyrs in the strength of their faith abandoned ease, family, even life itself. Fearlessly they faced the savage paganism of Rome, and joyously went forth to meet Jesus Christ, their Master, after sacrificing all for him. It is therefore at the tombs of the martyrs that we must seek renewed vigour of mind and a strengthening of faith.

DECEMBER 3

St Francis Xavier, Confessor*

The feast of this great Apostle of the Indies falls with a certain appropriateness within a day or two of that of St Andrew, since it bears testimony to the powerful vitality of the Church, which remains at all times true to herself in her works, her words, and her miracles, and is ever beautiful, young, and divine.

The Mass draws the greater part of its composition from the Common of Confessors, with the exception of the Introit, the Collect, and the two Lessons, which are Proper. It is to be noted that the Introit has been selected with an absolute disregard for the traditional rules of antiphonal psalmody. Instead of beginning with an antiphon and continuing with the first part of the corresponding psalm followed by the Doxology, the modern composer, obsessed by historical preoccupations and wishing to epitomize the whole life of St Francis Xavier in the Introit, has taken the antiphon from Psalm cxviii, joined in one the two verses of Psalm cxvi—without considering the musical difficulty of executing these long psalmodie hemistichs—and finally added the "Gloria." He could have made a very fine composition according to the traditional rules by preserving the whole of Psalm cxvi, and keeping the two verses separate; in this way we should at least have had in the Missal an Introit with several verses, as was originally the case in the Gregorian Antiphonary.

The Introit is common with that for Virgin Martyrs and refers, in a manner, to the Confessor of the Faith, who, standing before kings, speaks without fear and without shame of the eternal truths.

Psalm cxvi follows, having allusion to the universality of the Messianic kingdom. "Praise the Lord, all ye nations;

praise him, all ye people: because his mercy is confirmed upon us, and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever, y. Glory be."

In the Collect are commemorated the apostolic labours oi this new Paul of the eleventh hour; and, through his great merits, we ask for grace to imitate his actions. These are the words of this beautiful prayer: "O God, who wast pleased, by the preaching and miracles of blessed Francis, to bring into thy Church the nations of the Indies; mercifully grant that we who honour his glorious merits, may also follow the pattern of his virtues. Through our Lord."

The Epistle is the same as that for the feast of St Andrew. It is there said that the feet of those who proclaim the Kingdom of God to the people arc beautiful, because nothing is more pleasing to God, nothing more advantageous to the world, nothing more glorious to man than to work together with Jesus in the saving of souls.

The Gradual is taken, as for simple Confessors, from Psalm xci: ''The just shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus in the house of the Lord. y. To show forth thy mercy in the morning, and thy truth in the night." The lives of the saints are always fruitful in good works, because they, like so many branches, derive the living sap from the true vine, which is Christ. Thus alone can we explain their wonderful activity.

The alleluiatic verse comes from the Epistle of St James (i, 12), where he calls that man blessed who endureth temptation, for when he hath been proved he shall receive the crown of life. The state of temptation is our normal condition in this life and for this reason this verse is assigned to all feasts of Confessors.

How different are the judgements of God from those commonly accepted among men! With them trial and temptation are considered misfortunes and arouse the compassion even of the best. The Holy Ghost, on the contrary, declares those blessed who are subjected to this test, and his judgement must suffice to correct all our human views. Blessed is he, therefore, who endures temptation, for there is nothing which brings us nearer to God and enables us to make greater progress in well-doing than this trial. It is when we are in the midst of temptation that God is nearest to us, as the Psalmist says: *Juxta est Dominus iis qui tribulato sunt corde;* so that even if the trial brought with it no other advantage than that of asking God to stand by us, it ought to be desired by all faithful souls.

The Gospel drawn from St Mark (xvi, 15-18) is well suited to the feast of this great apostle; great, not only through the immense field covered by his missionary labours, but yet

more through the wonderful miracles that he worked, which recall those wrought by the apostles. Indeed, there is wanting to the renown of this humble son of St Ignatius none of the great gifts bestowed on the first preachers of the Gospel; the power of healing the sick, of raising the dead, of making himself understood by peoples speaking widely different languages, of causing pestilences to cease, and even, when he was unable to go in person whither he was called, of causing children to act as his substitutes, giving them his crucifix with Avhich to heal the sick.

The Offertory is derived from Psalm Ixxxviii, and is common to all feasts of simple Confessors. " My truth and my mercy shall be with him ; and in my name shall his horn be exalted." The solemnities of the saints increase the glory of God, just as in a work of art that which we really admire is not the painted wood nor the sculptured stone for itself, but the genius of the artist who has transfused and, as it were, spiritualized the lifeless matter.

The Secret offers to God the sacrifice of praise in memory of the saints, who in their turn have accumulated copious merits by the immolation of themselves for him as living holocausts. We therefore ask God through the abundant merits of the saints to deliver us from the evils of this present life—especially those which threaten the soul—so that we may the more easily escape eternal punishment.

The Communion from the Gospel of St Matthew (xxiv, 46-7) is read regularly on the feasts of simple Confessors. " Blessed is that servant, whom, when the Lord shall come, he shall find watching : Amen, I say to you, he shall set him over all his goods." The treasures of God are the Church and the souls committed to her care. The Lord sets his saints over this precious charge because they are the chosen members of the redemption and by their unfailing prayers in heaven watch over the needs of the Christian community.

In the Post-Communion we beg for the effective result of the prayers of the saint in whose honour the divine Sacrifice has been offered.

The holiness of St Francis Xavier is a splendid result of the " Spiritual Exercises," and of assiduous and diligent meditation on the truths of the Faith. A saint differs from an ordinary Christian because, with stricter logic, he carries out faithfully those things which he promised at his baptism. For there are not two vocations, the one a call to the Faith, the other to perfection, since all Christians are, as St Paul says, *vocati sancti.* It is necessary, then, to take our spiritual life more seriously, so that our journey through this world may be guided by a more rigorous logic. This is the fruit of meditation.

DECEMBER 4

St Barbara, Virgin and Martyr

Before the feast of St Francis Xavier on December 2 caused that of St Peter Chrysologus to be celebrated two days later, this day was dedicated to St Barbara. The festival of this famous Eastern martyr, who probably came from Heliopolis in Phoenicia, was inserted in the Roman Calendar at least as early as the twelfth century; but she was venerated in Rome long before that, for Gregory the Great, Leo IV, Stephen III, and other Popes in the early Middle Ages dedicated basilicas and oratories to her at the *Clivus Scauri,* near the titular church of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs, the church of St Lawrence *in Agro Verano,* the theatre of Pompey and elsewhere.

It is probable that her *cultus* was introduced by the Byzantines, and that it spread from Rome to other parts of Italy. We know, indeed, from John the Deacon that St Gregory the Great, whilst he was still a monk and abbot of St Andrew, *in oratorio sanctae Barbarae.....Gregorius laudes Domino celebrare solebat.*[1] Thus the veneration paid to St Barbara at Rome dates at least from the end of the sixth century.

The Mass is the Common of Virgin Martyrs.

The Introit is derived, like that of the feast of St Francis Xavier, from Psalm cxviii, and alludes to the martyr fearlessly confessing the Christian faith before the earthly rulers, in accordance with the promise made by Christ to his disciples that the Holy Ghost would inspire them then and there, when brought before the tribunals, what to answer to the confusion of the unbelievers.

In the Collect, the fact that a weak woman should have been proved worthy of the martyr's palm is extolled as being one of the greatest wonders wrought by divine power. Truly, as St John Chrysostom says, the victory which the Lord wins, when the martyr is a woman, becomes all the more glorious in proportion to the delicacy and weakness of the instrument. We, therefore, pray to God that through the merits of this splendid victory over our ancient foe, who flattered himself once more that he would be able to deceive the heroine whose feast we keep to-day, as he deceived our mother Eve, he will give us strength to walk in the footsteps of the martyr and follow her valiant example. We celebrate the festival of a woman whose great deeds prove the virility

[1] L. IV, 89; *P.L.* LXXV, coL 234.

of her spirit, while our timidity indicates a truly feminine weakness within us which needs to be urged to greater zeal bj the heroic faith of a woman.

The Lesson is from Ecclesiasticus (li, 1-8, 12). The martyr attributes to God alone the merit of her wonderful triumph over the flattering words of the wicked, the threats of the judges, the roaring beasts ready to devour her in the amphitheatre, the crackling flames of the pyre. God has made her stronger than all these terrible weapons of Satan, and though for an instant he has been given power over the mortal body of the martyr, yet her soul has escaped from his hands and has sped to God her Maker.

The Gradual comes from Psalm xciv, which was known by those of old as the psalm of virginity: "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity, y. Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness." This verse reminds us of the dying words of the great Pontiff Hildebrand,[1] who, worn out by the conflicts and hardships endured in defending the liberty of the Church against the Emperor, Henry IV, and seized with a mortal sickness at Salerno, uttered these last words expressive of his adamantine character: " I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile."

The allcluiatic verse is taken from the same Psalm xliv : " After her shall virgins be brought to the King, her neighbours shall be brought to thee with gladness and rejoicing." The virgin of whom the Psalmist speaks is the Church and also the Blessed Virgin Mary, by whose virginal fragrance many souls are attracted and, espousing themselves to the immaculate Lamb, follow him to the rugged heights of Calvary.

The Gospel from St Matthew (xxv, 1-13) was commentated on by St Gregory the Great to the people on the feast of St Agnes. The bridegroom is Christ, the bride is the Church. The espousals denote the end of this time of trial and the beginning of the kingdom of God. The virgins who go out to meet the bridegroom and the bride are the souls of the faithful, to whom is given the noble title of " virgins," inasmuch as they keep themselves from all that may stain their baptismal innocence. The lamps filled with oil are the lives rich in merit from numerous good works, while the empty lamps signify those who are only Christian in name and outward appearance. The door admitting to the heavenly feast is closed to these, because-in the life eternal good works alone are of value, which engraft on the trunk of faith the manifold shoots of charity.

The Offertory verse is identical with the alleluiatic verse.

[1] Gregory VII (1073-87).

To-day the divine sacrifice, odorous with the perfume of virginity, is offered to the King, and to it the holy martyr, Barbara, once united the sacrifice of her own blood.

In the Secret we ask God graciously to accept the oblations presented to him in memory of his noble martyr, and as by the shedding of her blood she has obtained great power over the heart of her bridegroom, so we beseech him to reward and fulfil by his grace the confidence which we place in the intercession of so powerful a protectress.

The Communion is drawn from Psalm cxviii. "Let the proud be ashamed, because they have done unjustly towards me. I resisted their flattery and their threats, O Lord, because I meditated on thy word, and found in it sweetness and strength which preserved me from yielding to their allurements and from being frightened by the sufferings with which the persecutors threatened me. Thy love enabled me to overcome the love of creatures, whilst thy fear led me to defy all their vain menaces."

In the Post-Communion we implore God that the Holy Eucharist which we have received in our hearts may be to us a pledge of his perpetual protection, through the merits of the martyr herself. This means that God must guard in us that which is his; in other words, that divine grace, that mystical life, which Jesus in the Eucharist brings in to the hearts of the faithful, in whom he desires to live again and to manifest his power. In order to obtain so great a favour, we do well to associate the intercession of the martyrs with the divine Sacrifice, for their blood in a sense forms part of that single and universal holocaust which Jesus in the name of us all sanctified and offered to his Father on Calvary'. Besides this, the martyrs are the brightest flowers that bloom in the eucharistie garden of the heavenly bridegroom; therefore they, better than any other, are able by their prayers to guard and to render efficacious in us the fruits of Holy Communion.

Almost all Eastern Christians celebrate on this day the feast of St Barbara, to whom the Byzantines give the title of Βαρβάρα *μ(γαλ.ομ.άρτνρ.* Her *Acta* are doubtful, but an heroic confession of faith made amidst torments and sealed by' the shedding of blood suffices to obtain the veneration of the Church. A saying of St Ambrose may here be recalled to mind : *Martyrem dixi, praedicavi satis.*

DECEMBER 4

St Peter Chrysologus, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church*

The feast of this celebrated Bishop of Ravenna, who died on December 2, about the year 450, had already found place in the Roman Liturgy some time before Benedict XIII raised it to a double, chiefly in honour of the title of Doctor of the Universal Church attributed to St Peter Chrysologus from very early times. Indeed it is most fitting that the Roman Church should give a place of honour in her Advent Liturgy to him who, having been consecrated bishop at Rome, laboured so zealously together with St Leo the Great (440-61) so that in the unity of person the twofold nature, the human and the divine, of the Incarnate Word should be distinguished by the Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon (451), and that the contrary heresy of Eutyches should thus be condemned.

We will here recall the celebrated words addressed by St Peter Chrysologus to Eutyches, who had solicited his interest : *Quoniam beatus Petrus qui in propria sede et vivit et praesidet, praestat quaerentibus fidei veritatem ; nos enim pro studio pacis et fidei, extra consensum Romanae civitatis episcopi, causas fidei audire non possumus.*[1]

The Mass is from the Common of Doctors with the exception of those parts given below.

The Antiphon for the Introit is also that of the feast of St John the Evangelist, and is taken from Ecclesiasticus (xv, 5). The disciple of the eternal Wisdom becomes in his turn a teacher of religious truth. Filled with that spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, and knowledge which formerly spoke through the prophets and the apostles, he will then establish his chair of instruction in the midst of the assembly of the faithful and will teach them the ways of God. So the Church, by means of her holy doctors, her pontiffs, and her Ecumenical Councils, remains throughout the ages that flaming torch placed in a golden candlestick, that immovable pillar and support of every heavenly truth which the Apostle describes in his First Epistle to Timothy (·«» »5).

The Collect is a comparatively late compilation, though its original form is ancient. The compiler, intent on the history of the saint, has wished to bring in an allusion to the vision of the Pope which preceded the ordination of St Peter Chrysologus as bishop, and also his twofold office of ruler

» *P.L.* LIV, 739-44» »· 25.

and teacher of the Church. The result is that the general conception is overlaid by details and the whole period has lost both in harmony and in elegance of proportion.

" O God, who didst miraculously point out the glorious doctor Peter Chrysologus, and choose him to be a ruler and teacher of thy Church; grant, we beseech thee, that, as on earth he taught us the way of life, so in heaven he may be our continual intercessor with thee. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is derived from the Second Epistle of St Paul to Timothy (iv, 1-8), and is the same as that of the Mass of St Sylvester (314-37). St Paul on the eve of his martyrdom, being about to pour out his life as a libation, as he with vigorous words expresses it, conjures his disciple, by all that he holds most sacred in heaven and on earth, to preach the Gospel without ceasing, and by so doing oppose the theories of that false *gnosis* which was already making its way among them.

From this last appeal of the great Apostle, in which he even invokes the fearful judgement of Christ himself, the bishops and priests of the Church may all learn the paramount importance which the preaching of God's word assumes in the care of souls, and the strict account which they will have to render to God and to the flock confided to them if they have neglected this first and most essential office of a true pastor. St Paul was so convinced of this, that having already entrusted to others the work of administering baptism so that he might devote himself more assiduously to preaching, he yet trembled for himself, and exclaimed: *Vae mihi si non evangelizavero.* The Eleven also considered the preaching of the Gospel to be their chief occupation, and having elected the first seven deacons, they handed over to them the management of the Church's worldly affairs, keeping for themselves the duty of preaching and prayer: *Nos vero orationi et ministerio verbi instantes erimus.*[1]

The Gradual is adapted from Ecclesiasticus (xliv, 16, 20), as it is for the feast of St Thomas of Canterbury on December 29: "Behold a great priest, who in his days pleased God. ℣. There was not found one like unto him, who kept the law of the Most High." St Bernard remarks that it would indeed be a most unnatural thing for a man to be first in rank and last in merit.

The alleluiatic verse, which, it is well to remember, followed the second Lesson before the Gospel, is from Psalm cix, an undoubtedly Messianic psalm. It refers literally to Christ, who has received from his Father, in contradistinction to the levitical ministry, an eternal priesthood, that priesthood of which Melchisedech is a type in Holy Scripture, uniting in

[1] Acta vi, 4.

his own person the dignity both of a king and of a priest, and offering up to God in the presence of Abraham a sacrifice of bread and wine. The Holy Ghost himself has fully explained to us, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, this mysterious symbolism of Melchisedech, king of peace and justice, priest of the Most High, to whom the Patriarch of all believers himself offered tithes as tribute. It is because of this that Melchisedech is mentioned in the Canon of the Mass.

The Gospel comes from St Matthew (v, 13-19). The mission of the apostles and of the Church is a social one, therefore it cannot be carried out in secret, unseen, and ignored. All men must come to the knowledge of the eternal salvation to be found in Christ, hence the Church is like a torch, or like a city built on the top of a high hill, so that its light may shine forth on all sides, and that all may see it from afar and be able to turn their footsteps towards it.

This being so, is it possible that, after more than nineteen hundred years since the Redemption, the state of irréligion ostentatiously professed by modern society can be the result of ignorance alone and compatible with good faith? Or, rather must we not say of the world in our day that which was said by Jesus of the Synagogue : The light shone forth upon the world, but men preferred darkness to light.

The Offertory is drawn from Psalm xci : " The just shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow up like the cedar which is in Libanus."

In the Secret we pray that the intercession of the saint may never fail us ; and that his prayers may render our sacrifice more acceptable and obtain for us the precious fruits of the divine mercy. Such is the office of the angels and of the saints at the golden altar of God in heaven. Here on earth our prayers are feeble and cold, but those heavenly beings who are all filled with the fire of divine love are well able to transform our petitions by their own ardour and so present them to God.

The Antiphon for the Communion is identical with that of the feast of St Apollinaris, and would appear to be common to the holy Bishops of Ravenna. It is a fragment taken from St Matthew (xxv, 20, 21), and is therefore different from that previously read for to-day's Gospel (St Matthew v, 13-19) : " Lord, thou didst deliver to me five talents : behold, I have gained other five over and above. Well done, good and faithful servant ; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The talents signify the word of God, which, by means of prudent and faithful preaching, is spread abroad by the bishops and teachers of the Church to the people of God,

plebi sanctae Dei, as the early Christians used to say, so that it may be returned to the divine Judge with the interest of eager acceptance and the practice of good works.

In the Post-Communion we ask that God will receive the intercession of the saint in our favour, so that the sacrifice, the efficacy of which might be hindered if our merit alone were to be regarded, may by his prayers become a fount of eternal salvation to all.

It would be desirable for us in these days to meditate upon a famous saying of St Peter Chrysologus addressed to the frivolous inhabitants of Ravenna in his time. " He who wishes to take his pleasure with Satan will not be able to rejoice hereafter with Jesus Christ." ''To take one's pleasure with Satan " means to follow the habits, the pomps, the luxuries, and the frivolities of the worldly, all of which hinder us from taking up our cross to follow Jesus Christ. Such men, the Apostle says, are enemies of the cross of Christ, and their end, if they do not repent, will be death and eternal damnation.

DECEMBER 5

St Sabbas, Abbot

Station at the Monastery of " Celia Nova "

The *cultus* of this famous founder[1] of the *laura* at Jerusalem, which still bears his name, was brought to Rome in the seventh century by some of his monks, who took refuge there when the Holy City fell into the hands of the Arabs. Under the name of *Celia nova* the Sabbaites built a monastery on the Pseudo-Aventine, on the spot where formerly Silvia, the mother of St Gregory the Great, had found comfort in devotional practices during the last years of her widowed life. Thus it was that the devotion to St Sabbas found its way into the Roman Liturgy and became especially popular in the Middle Ages.

In fact when, in the tenth century, the Abbey was reckoned amongst the most powerful and the most celebrated in the City, the name of its titular saint was introduced even in the short *laudes* or litanies which were customarily recited on those most solemn occasions when the Supreme Pontiff, crowned with the *regnum,* offered the holy Sacrifice.

Not many years ago, some excavations which were being carried out in the Basilica of St Sabbas on the Aventine brought to light the apse of the original church, together with several frescoes of biblical subjects and a number of tombs of the early Greek occupants of the sanctuary,

[1] Died in 532.

those among whom Bishop St Gregory of Girgenti was received in the seventh century with such kind hospitality, as his contemporary Leontius tells us.

In the West, devotion to St Sabbas was confined almost entirely to Rome; the Latins never attributed any very great importance to that grand figure of monasticism, to whom the Greeks give the titles of *θιόφορο , ô ηγιασμένο , Αγισπολίτη ,* "he who was full of the spirit of God," ‘‘the sanctified," "the dweller in the Holy City," “ the star of the desert," "the patriarch of the monks." His life, rich in merits and prominent in labours for the peace of the Church, which was then torn by heresies, has been related by Cyril of Scythopolis.[1]

The Mass of St Sabbas is that of the Common of Abbots.

The Introit is from Psalm xxxvi : “ The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom ; and his tongue shall speak judgement. The law of his God is in his heart."

The law of God engraved in the heart means the interior life of those who love God, the action of the Paraclete who renders their spiritual movements conformable to those of the heart of Jesus Christ. *Hoc enim sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu.* The judgement and wisdom which adorn the lips of the just man signify that *mensura plenitudinis Christi,* the entire fulfilment of all the duties of a man’s state of life, in which Christian perfection consists.

In to-day’s Collect, the insufficiency of human nature is dwelt upon, wherefore that which it would be vain presumption to hope for through our own merits, we confidently expect to obtain from the divine compassion, through the abounding merits of the holy Abbot. The hidden motive on which this trust is based is the comforting doctrine of the Communion of Saints in the unity of the Christian family.

The Lesson is that passage from Ecclesiasticus (xlv, 1-6) which tells us of the praises of Moses. As Moses, because of his faith and his meekness, showed himself the ideal lawgiver of the people of God, so the holy Abbot merited through these same virtues to become the leader and spiritual teacher of a chosen people, who, because of their whole-hearted consecration to God, may be called, with greater right than the Jews, the people of the Lord. The sacred writer puts before us two virtues which specially characterize the spiritual leader—faith and meekness. Faith here indicates that docility which prompts the soul to follow the secret inspirations of grace ; while meekness points to that wise discretion, full of gentleness and charity, which adapts its injunctions to the strength of him who has to carry them out.

[1] Bethsean in Palestine.—Ta.

The Gradual is drawn from Psalm xx : " O Lord, thou hast prevented him with blessings of sweetness : thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones, y. He asked life of thee, and thou hast given him length of days for ever and ever." The " blessings of sweetness" with which God has anticipated on earth the heavenly glorification ol his elect are those of grace, which contains the germ of future glory.

The alleluiatic verse is derived from Psalm xci : " The just shall flourish like the palm-tree : he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus." These words applied to the holy Abbot refer to the increase of his spiritual children in the monastic life, whom God multiplies for the common good of the faithful.

The Gospel is taken from St Matthew (xix, 27-29). St Peter, dismayed by the fate which Jesus had said was reserved for the rich, asks what, on the other hand, shall be the reward of the apostles, who, for the love of Christ, had followed him, renouncing all that they possessed. Jesus widens the subject somewhat and replies that the reward of such total renunciation would be true liberty of spirit, the special protection of divine Providence in this world, and life eternal in the next.

In this short extract from the New Testament may be seen the foundations of the religious and monastic edifice within the Church. Henceforth, a host of generous souls will walk in the footsteps of Christ and his apostles ; free from every worldly tie they will be the heart and the arms of the Church, and will contribute more than any other thing to maintain her in the right path towards heaven.

The Offertory has been selected from Psalm xx : " Thou hast given him his heart's desire, O Lord, and hast not withholden from him the will of his lips ; thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones." The wish and desire of a monk, of a soul, that is, which, having abandoned all earthly things, seeks God alone, can only be God himself. The saint now rejoices in having won this prize. He who on earth went hungry and barefoot with his head shaved in the form of a crown as a sign of humility and mortification, enters heaven rich in merits, and his crown is Christ. *Pauper et modicus, caelum dives ingreditur.*

In the Secret we beseech God to accept favourably the oblations laid upon the altar. These are spoken of in the plural as " oblations," because they served also for the Communion of the faithful, who had themselves presented them. Weak are our prayers, but let this great exemplar of prayer arise, this invincible Solitary, who whilst on earth imitated the divine Teacher and *erat pernoctans in oratione*

Dei, as though the days were too short for his fervour, let him arise and lift up on high our supplications strengthening them with his powerful intercession.

The verse for the Communion (Luke xii, 42) is adapted quite irregularly from a portion of the Gospel which is not that appointed for to-day's Mass. It is the same verse as that in use for the Common of Doctors. As these have fed the Lord's flock by the power of the jurisdiction and hierarchical dignity with which they have been endowed from heaven, so, too, the holy founders of the religious Orders are in a manner the patriarchs, law-givers, and doctors of those whose divine vocation led them to be their disciples.

In the Post-Communion, we beg among other eucharistie gifts, for grace to follow the high example of the holy Abbot, St Sabbas. This is the most sure means of meriting his protection, for it is useless to honour the saints if our mind refuses to imitate them.

St Sabbas was distinguished by his great love of orthodoxy and his zealous desire that all the churches should accept the dogmatic definitions of the Council of Chalcedon. The first condition necessary for making progress along the path of sanctity is to practise true orthodoxy, and the surest way of avoiding the rocks so often encountered on the road to heaven is that spoken of by St Ignatius in his " Spiritual Exercises" : *sentire cum Ecclesia*—that is, to be filled with the same spirit as that which pervades the Catholic Church.

DECEMBER 6

St Nicholas, Bishop and Confessor

Station at St Nicholas in Carcere

The name of this celebrated wonder-worker, who was Bishop of Myra at the time of the Council of Nicæa (325)1 was definitely included in the Roman Calendar about the eleventh century. His *cultus,* however, is far more ancient, and it assumed such extensive proportions in medieval Rome that there are known to have existed some sixty churches at least dedicated to him. Among these the most famous is that one near the Portico of Octavia, called St Nicholas *in Carcere Tulliano* or *in foro olitorio,* where the station is held on the Saturday after the Fourth Sunday in Lent.

There was also an oratory dedicated to St Nicholas at the Lateran, which, having been rebuilt from its foundations by Pope Callixtus II (1119-24), became a kind of votive monument of the victory gained in the twelfth century by the Roman Pontificate over German Imperialism.

The chapel which stood almost opposite the oratory of St Lawrence was destroyed under Clement XIII (1758-69), but the designs for the paintings which decorated it have been preserved.

In the East the feast of St Nicholas του *ιεροκήρυκαν,* του *πατροκορυφαίου, του μυροβλύτου,* was made a holiday of obligation by order of the Emperor Emmanuel Comnenus (1143-81), and it was also observed as such in some European dioceses. The cause which brought about the immense fame that St Nicholas enjoyed among the Greeks was the wonderful liquid which still exudes from his bones at Bari. The title of Confessor was originally given to the wonder-worker of Myra on account of his sufferings during the last persecution. That he was present at the Council of Nicæa is highly probable, but for the rest the legend of the saint must be received with a prudent reserve.

The Collects and the Lesson are the only portions of the Mass proper to the feast, the remainder is taken from the Common of Confessors who were bishops.

The Introit (Ecclesiasticus xlv, 30) is inspired by the praises given to the High Priest Phinees : " The Lord made with him a covenant of peace, and made him a prince ; that the dignity of priesthood should be to him for ever." The " covenant " here spoken of refers to that *ministerium reconciliationis* alluded to by St Paul. The Lord not only poured his gentle peace into the soul of the High Priest, but, because he was pleasing to God, granted him the grace of obtaining pardon for the people, reconciling them to him and bringing them back once more to the observance of his holy law. The true foundation of peace is the conformity of our heart and our will with the will of God.

The Collect calls to mind the numberless miracles for which St Nicholas was famous in the Middle Ages, and begs almighty God that the many wonders by which the Catholic faith is daily confirmed may by the merits of the saint save us from the fires of hell. This is the chief aim of our holy vocation : to separate us from Satan and hell so as to direct our whole life to God and to the practice of well doing.

In the following Lesson from St Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews (xiii, 7-17) the Apostle exhorts us to follow the example of the first disciples of the Saviour, and the first leaders of the Christian community, who had already made confession of their faith by martyrdom. Jesus has not for us merely an historical significance, as of one whose life is finished and over. Not only does he fill the entire history of creation as the beginning and ultimate end of all things, but his mystical life in the Church and in the souls of the faith-

fui continues in an especial manner through all the ages. When, therefore, we suffer for his holy name, we, too, are taking our cross upon our shoulders, and are allowing ourselves to be led forth from our earthly city in order to follow him up the steep ascent to Calvary.

Lesson (Hebrews xiii, 7-17) : " Brethren, remember your prelates who have spoken the word of God to you ; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever. Be not led away with various and strange doctrines. For it is best that the heart be established with grace, not with meats : which have not profited those that walk in them. We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the Holies by the High Priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore to him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come. By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise always to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing to his name. And do not forget to do good, and to impart ; for by such sacrifices God's favour is obtained. Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls."

The Gradual is derived from Psalm lxxxviii : " I have found David, my servant, with my holy oil I have anointed him ; for my hand shall help him, and my arm shall strengthen him." In the Holy Scriptures David represents the Messias, and each time that the Holy Spirit desires to praise one of the leaders of his people Israel, he compares him to David. In the sacred Liturgy this verse is applied also to the holy Pontiffs who, on account of their episcopal anointing and their office, resemble the true David, Jesus Christ, the fount and model of all holiness.

The alleluiatic verse is the same as that for the feast of St Sabbas.

The Gospel Lesson (Matt, xxv, 14-23) is common to the Mass of all holy Bishops, and contains the parable of the talents entrusted by a householder to his servants so that they should trade with them during his absence. Our life, with all the gifts of nature and of grace which adorn it, is like a capital sum of money which has been confided to us to be employed in commerce. No one has the right to remain slothful and indolent, merely guarding the deposit; we are all bound to make it bear fruit, and those who have received more must also render more.

It is therefore perfectly legitimate to realize and acknow-

ledge the gifts with which each one of us has been endowed by our divine Master. This recognition indeed is taken for granted as being necessary before anyone can decide in which way he can best serve God and save his own soul. The realization of our own talents, far from making us proud, must rather fill us with fear at the thought of the tremendous responsibility which they entail towards God and towards our fellow-men. No one of us is created and placed in isolation in the world, but each one forming part of the human family has received certain gifts and talents not solely for his own benefit, but which he must make use of for the common advantage of all his fellow-creatures.

The Offertory is part of Psalm Ixxxviii : " My truth and my mercy shall be with him ; and in my name shall his horn be exalted." This is the secret of the success which characterizes the activities of the saints. They do not either live or work in isolation, but in constant union with Jesus Christ, the true vine, therefore is the fruit which they bear most plentiful. How many efforts even within the Church's vineyard remain sterile and incomplete for want of this interior union !

In the Secret we entreat God that he will sanctify with the unction of holiness the sacrifice which we are about to offer to him in memory of St Nicholas. The fruit which we hope to derive from it is steadfastness in the love of God and union with Jesus Christ, so that neither the joys nor the inevitable sorrows of life may ever be able to loosen the bond which unites us to him. What a wealth of religious teaching is contained in these brief phrases of our holy Mother the Church !

The Communion is also from Psalm Ixxxviii, from which the Offertory is taken : " Once have I sworn by my holiness, his seed shall endure for ever; and his throne as the sun before me, and as the moon perfect for ever, and a faithful witness in heaven." Even if the works instituted by the saints here on earth sometimes fail in their aim—for the Church like a tree well-covered with foliage sheds its yellow leaves in due season in order to put forth fresh ones—their merit and their glory continue undiminished in the sight of God in heaven.

In the Post-Communion we pray that the sacrifice offered on this festival of the holy bishop, Nicholas, may have a lasting effect in us ; so that our sacramental union with Jesus Christ may strengthen that love which is to bind us to him for all eternity.

The fame of his miracles caused the name of St Nicholas to be renowned not only in the East, where, especially among the Russians, it is still held in great esteem, but even in the

most distant countries of the West, in which his *cultus* existed many centuries before the translation of his relics from Myra to Bari.[1]

From the sacred bones of the wonder-working saint to this day there exudes continuously drop by drop a kind of moisture known to the devout as the "manna" of St Nicholas. St Bridget, in a revelation which was given to her during a pilgrimage to Bari, learned from the Lord the motive of this prodigy. The miraculous oil which drops from the bones of the holy Bishop of Myra represents the immense charity and compassion which filled him in his lifetime and caused him to become all things to all men, so that he might succour all, and thus to lead them to the feet of Christ.

DECEMBER 7

St Ambrose, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church

Ambrose Uranius Aurelius was born probably at Treves, of an ancient and illustrious Roman family, which had already given to the Church the martyr St Soter, and which was to enrich the martyrology with two more names besides that of the holy Doctor of whom we are speaking, those of Satyrus and Marcellina, his own brother and sister. St Ambrose died at Milan on Easter Eve, April 4, 397. As, however, that day always recurs in Lent, or in Paschal week, when in accordance with the ancient liturgy all feasts in honour of the saints are excluded, his festival is kept to-day, which is the anniversary of his ordination as bishop.

This substitution dates at Rome from the eleventh century at least, and is founded on the very ancient liturgical custom of solemnly celebrating the *natale ordinationis* of bishops and priests.

The Gelasian Sacramentary marks this day as the Octave of the feast of St Andrew; but this festival, which was probably peculiar to the Vatican Basilica, has long since ceased to be observed.

The Mass is taken almost entirely from the Common of Bishops and Doctors, but the second and third Prayers are proper to the day.

The Introit is that of the Common of Doctors, which we have already seen on the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

The Collect is very similar to that in the Mass of the holy Bishop of Ravenna. We ask God that, having given the

[1] This took place in 1097.—Ta.

Blessed Ambrose to the Church to be a minister of eternal salvation, he will also grant us the necessary docility to receive his heavenly doctrine and thus be worthy to have him for our advocate in heaven. This then is the disposition needed for obtaining the effects of the prayers of the saints : a spirit willing to imitate their example.

The Lesson is identical with that of the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

The Gradual is the same as the one for St Sylvester.

The alleluiatic verse comes from Psalm eix : " Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech." As the priests of the new law participate in the priesthood of Christ, so must they enter into his intentions of immense sanctity, of detachment from the world, of zeal for the glory of God, and of compassion for souls.

The Gospel is also that of the festival of St Peter Chrysologus.

The Offertory from Psalm Ixxxviii is the same as that appointed for the feast of St Nicholas.

The Secret is of a general character, and is as follows: " Almighty, everlasting God, grant that these gifts which we offer up to thy majesty may by the intercession of Blessed Ambrose, thy bishop and confessor, avail us for eternal salvation. Through our Lord."

The verse for the Communion is that of yesterday.

In the Post-Communion we implore of God that the intercession of the holy bishop may help us in all the circumstances of life, so that our unfaithfulness to grace may never render profitless the ineffable sacrament of eternal salvation, in which we have just now participated. St Ambrose was so full of zeal for the salvation of souls that when he was ruling over the Church at Milan it seemed as if there were no doors to his house,[1] since everyone was free to approach him at any hour of the day.

This is the text of the liturgical prayer: " Grant, O God almighty, that we who receive the sacrament of our salvation, may be everywhere helped by the prayer of Blessed Ambrose, thy confessor and bishop, in whose honour we have offered up these gifts to thy majesty. Through our Lord."

The sanctity of St Ambrose and the great dignity to which the Lord raised him fulfilled to the highest degree the prediction pronounced by Ambrose himself when a child concerning his own future greatness. It is related that when the Pope sometimes visited his mother in her own house, she immediately prostrated herself before him with her three sons

[1] *Non enim velabatur quisquam ingredi, aut ei venientem nuntiari mos erat* (August., *Confess.*, VI, j)

and kissed his hand. As soon as the Pontiff had left the house, the little Ambrose too held out his hand to Marcellina for her to kiss.

Two ancient churches kept alive the memory of St Ambrose amongst the people of Rome, one of which no longer exists. It stood near the Vatican Basilica, around which in the Middle Ages various oratories and national hospices had been erected for the pilgrims who flocked thither from all parts of the world. The other still remains and bears the title of St Ambrose *della Massima,* near the *porticus maxima,* which extended from the temple of Hercules all around the Campus Martius.

Its ancient name, according to the *Liber Pontificalis* in the biography of Leo III (795-816), was that of the monastery of Sta Maria *quod appellatur Ambrosii,* but it was dedicated also to St Stephen. The identification of this Ambrose with the doctor of the same name at Milan, who certainly had his family *domus* in Rome—for it was a notable house and one universally known, since the Popes themselves used often to visit it—is probable; but cannot be affirmed with absolute certainty.

DECEMBER 7

Vigil of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

This vigil is a kind of liturgical privilege, by which Pius IX wished to render still more solemn the feast of the Immaculate Conception, which dogma he had declared to be an article of the Catholic Faith. For when the custom of holding solemn vigiliary stations on the night preceding Sundays and the festivals of the most celebrated martyrs had ceased during the early Middle Ages, the great feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary which were introduced into Rome in the eighth century, such as the Purification and the Nativity, were not preceded in the Sacramentaries by any vigil. The only exception is the vigil of the Assumption, which was also famous in Rome by reason of a great torch-light procession which set out from the Lateran and went to the Basilica of St Mary Major, passing by Sta Maria Nova and the Imperial *fora.*

The Introit is taken from Psalm Ixv, in which the Psalmist calls upon the whole world to marvel at, and give thanks to the Lord for, the great favours which he had heaped upon him. These favours were in the divine plan to be as the Messianic preparation for the kingdom of Christ, wherefore

David the father speaks to-day in the name of his daughter Mary, and gives thanks to him who has made her " blessed among women."

" Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what great things he hath done for my soul. Shout with joy to God, all the earth; sing a psalm to his name, give glory to his name."

The Collect is inspired by that of the vigil of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, but the modern adaptation does not seem to be altogether a happy one. " O God, who didst wonderfully preserve the Mother of thine only-begotten Son from original sin in her conception, grant, we beseech thee, that we, who are defended by her intercession, may take part in her festival with clean hearts. Through the same."

In the following Lesson the Church applies to the Mother of the eternal Word that which the Preacher says of the eternal Wisdom himself. The authority of the sacred liturgy and of the saints assures us that this adapted application is perfectly legitimate, for the union between Mary and her divine Son is so intimate that the treasures of grace and mercy which are centred in Jesus flow from him into the heart of his blessed Mother.

Lesson (Ecclus. xxiv, 23-31) : " As the vine I have brought forth a pleasant odour, and my flowers are the fruit of honour and riches. I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope. In me is all grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life and of virtue. Come over to me, all ye that desire me, and be filled with my fruits ; for my spirit is sweet above honey, and my inheritance above honey and the honeycomb. My memory is unto everlasting generations. They that eat me, shall yet hunger; and they that drink me, shall yet thirst. He that hearkeneth to me shall not be confounded, and they that work by me shall not sin. They that explain me shall have life everlasting."

The Gradual, although derived from two sources, is indeed inspired by a single idea, but this modern fusion of the Book of Proverbs with that of the Psalms is contrary to the real nature of the Gradual, which originally was merely the responsorial psalm that followed the first scriptural lesson.

Prov. ix, i : " Wisdom hath built herself a house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars."

Psalm lxxxvi : " Her foundations are in the holy mountains ; the Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the tabernacles of Jacob."

The divine Wisdom himself prepares his habitation, for, as the Church teaches in her Liturgy, God prepared the body

and soul oi the Immaculate Virgin by the action of the Holy Ghost in order that she might become the holy and untainted temple of the Word made flesh.

In the vigiliary Masses which had an almost private and penitential character, and at which only a limited number of priests and devout persons were present in contradistinction to the great stational Masses in which formerly the whole people took part, the alleluiatic chant was omitted, but it was sung at the solemn Mass on the following morning.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin is intimately connected with that of her Nativity, for which reason the Church reads to-day the genealogy of the divine Redeemer (Matt, i, 1-16), which was recited on September 8, even in early times.

The genealogical tree of Jesus Christ, which has a mnemonic and representative character, although with several gaps, carries with it a far deeper theological meaning than that of a mere historical detail, for it confirms the divine promise made to Abraham and to David—namely, that from their race would be born the Messias. For he willed, not only to have the Virgin Mary for his Mother, but he so disposed that his forefathers should be Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, etc. Thus the reality of his human nature being proved without a doubt, men would realize that the W'ord had truly assumed their flesh in order to raise it up to the throne of God.

It may frequently be observed in the ancient codices of the Gospels that the page of the parchment on which the genealogical tree of our Saviour is inscribed has been dyed with purple and illuminated in gold to indicate the highest reverence which we must pay to all that concerns the adorable person of the divine Saviour.

The Offertory, departing from the ancient Gregorian tradition, is derived from the Canticle of Canticles (vi, 2) instead of being taken from the Psalter. It expresses all the ineffable purity and holiness of Mary, whose dignity is wholly comprised in the words: " I to my beloved, and my beloved to me, who feedeth among the lilies."

In the Secret we invoke the intercession of Mary, that it may render our sacrifice acceptable to God. " Grant, O Lord, that the prayer of the Immaculate Mother of God may commend our offerings to thy mercy, even as thou didst keep her free from all stain of original sin, so that she might be worthy to become a fit dwelling-place for thy Son : who liveth."

The Communion is also from the Canticle (vi, 9) : " Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?"

Mary is compared to the morning- dawn because she is the forerunner of the true Sun of Justice, Jesus our Saviour.

The Post-Communion is very expressive although the Missal merely interpolates and adapts to to-day's vigil an ancient Collect from the Breviary : " Grant, O most merciful God, thy help in our weakness, that we who are preparing for the festival of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of thine only-begotten Son, may by the help of her intercession rise up from our wickedness. Through the same."

After Jesus, Mary is the masterpiece of creation, and bears in herself more perfectly than any other creature the likeness and seal of the Creator. All other beings only consecrate themselves to God partially, or too late, when sin has already wounded them and weakened their powers. Jesus desired a Mother who would be all his own, who would belong to him entirely, by all those titles by which the Mother of God could belong to God. He therefore created Mary for himself. He formed her body, he created her soul, and he filled them with all the treasures of grace, which such a creature was capable of assimilating. As the flower is the true beauty of the plant, so the Saviour willed to be born, according to the prophecy of Isaias, from the pure stem of Mary, so as to be himself the glory, honour, and the fruit of her immaculate virginity.

DECEMBER 8

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

This dogma of the Catholic Faith which is so consoling for us, so glorious for Mary, and so honourable for the entire human race, is only dimly foreshadowed in Holy Scripture, whether in the Old or the New Testament. Yet it forms part of the divine deposit of Catholic tradition, and finds in the liturgies of the various churches the most authoritative witness and exponent of this same belief.

The exemption of the Blessed Virgin Mary from original sin is explicitly affirmed in the Koran, which in this case is only the echo of the belief of the Nestorian Churches : Every human creature has been affected by Satan at its birth with the exception of Mary and her Son.[1] St Ephrem the Syrian, in a hymn composed in the year 370, causes the Church of Edessa to declare : " Thou and thy Mother are the only ones who under every aspect are entirely beautiful, since in thee O Lord, there is no stain, nor any blemish in thy Mother."[2]

[1] ζ/· Θ' ^uhy» *Christus,* p. 775, n. 1. Beauchesne, Paris, 1916.
[2] *Carm. Nisib.,* n. 27, Ed. Bicknell, 40.

Very many Fathers of the Church, especially the Greeks of the first patristic age, repeat the same thought concerning the absolute purity of the Blessed Virgin, although the greater number, rather than propound the formal question of the Conception as it was put forward later by the Scholastics, suppose it rather to be resolved in the meaning of the dogmatic definition of Pius IX—namely, that the immaculate purity which they ascribe to the Mother of God is to be understood in its fullest signification, so as to exclude even the blemish of original sin.

A local feast on December 9 in honour of the Conception of Mary most holy is mentioned in a sermon of Bishop John of Euboea, a contemporary of St John Damascene.[1]

About a century later the festival had gained ground, and had become common among the Greeks, as appears from a discourse of Bishop George of Nicomedia on the " *Conceptio sanctae Annae.*"[2] The early Fathers in general take this word in its active sense, so that in their calendars the heading *Conceptio sanctae Mariae* commemorates instead the Incarnation of the Saviour.

The feast of the " Conception of St Anne, Mother of the Mother of God," appears under December 9 in the calendar which bears the name of the Emperor Basil II Porphyrogenitus, and is likewise included among the feasts to be kept as holidays of obligation in a decree of Michael Comnenus in 1166.

In the West the *Conceptio sanctae Annae* is noted on December 9 in the famous marble calendar of the Church of Naples, which dates back to the ninth century. The date and the title at once reveal Byzantine influence, an influence dominating over not only gay Parthenope,[3] but Sicily and all Southern Italy, which for many centuries continued to form part of the Empire ruled over by the later successors of Constantine and Theodosius.

In the twelfth century, we find that in Normandy, in England, and in Ireland, the feast of the Conception of the Blessed Xzirgin on December 8 had been received with enthusiasm in several abbeys and canonical chapters, in spite of the protests of some opposing bishops. How had this primitive Eastern festival found its way from the shores of the Bosphorus to those distant lands? It is commonly believed that the vehicle of its transmission was the Norman army which in the eleventh century invaded and established itself in Southern Italy. This, however, is not altogether certain, yet it must be admitted that the earliest English and Irish records of the feast of the Conception show distinct evidence of Greek origin.

[1] *P.G.* XCVI, col. 1499. [2] *P.G.* C, col. 1353. [3] *i.t.,* Naples

We must now consider what was the original significance of this feast of the Conception of St Anne, or of the Mother of God. In no ancient liturgical document, it is true, is the title "immaculate" added to the word "Conception," but from what has been said above, it is clear that it must have been implicitly understood, for otherwise the feast would have had no particular meaning. This is also confirmed by the Byzantine feast of the Conception of St John the Baptist, which festival commemorated the sanctification of the Precursor of Christ in his mother's womb.

The Roman Liturgy remained content for many centuries with the four great Byzantine feasts in honour of Mary, and did not celebrate her Conception. When the first controversies on the theological aspect of the solemnity began in the West, Rome, before pronouncing a decision, permitted the great champions of sacred science to bring forward their various arguments, St Anselm, the Canons of Lyons, St Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus opposing Eadmer, St. Bernard, St Thomas, and the most celebrated medieval liturgists.

It was of great importance in the external history of the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception that the recently established Order of the Friars Minor constituted itself its apostle and defender throughout Europe. As early as 1263 the feast was kept as a day of obligation in all Franciscan monasteries, and it was certainly due to their enormous influence and popularity that in the thirty-sixth session of the schismatic Council of Basel on September 17, 1439, the assembled Fathers declared that this doctrine found full confirmation in the sources of Catholic revelation.

Under Sixtus IV—a Franciscan Pope—the Roman Church took a truly decisive step. By a decree of February 27, 1477, this Pontiff ordered the observance of the feast, and the use of the Office : *Conceptionis Immaculatae Virginis Mariae for* the whole city. Two years afterwards he erected and endowed in the Vatican Basilica a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin under the same title of the Immaculate Conception.

The favourable attitude shown by the Council of Trent towards the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is well known ; but the extreme prudence of the Holy See allowed three more centuries to elapse before coming to a final decision on the question, which for more than nine hundred years had agitated the most eminent theologians of Europe.

This glory was accorded by divine Providence to the holy Pontiff Pius IX, during whose reign the prolonged studies of the Doctors of the Church regarding the sources of the

Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary were at last brought to an end. On December 8, 1854, before an imposing assembly of several hundred bishops, the Pope finally promulgated in St Peter's his Bull *Ineffabilis Deus,* in which this dogma is defined as being in conformity with the Catholic Faith as revealed by God, and therefore to be believed and held fast by all the faithful.

The Eastern Christians, amongst whom the most ancient and most explicit testimonies for the dogma were to be found, began to declare themselves opposed to the dogma, because it had been promulgated by the " Bishop of ancient Rome," whom they viewed with unfriendly eyes, and to accuse the papal party of introducing an innovation ; yet as far back as the end of the seventeenth century, the Jesuit Besson, after having pointed out by means of more than two hundred passages drawn from their liturgies the perfect agreement of the early Eastern Fathers with the Latin Doctors concerning the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, obtained from them a definite declaration written and signed by three patriarchs and an archimandrite. That of the head of the Syriac Church was worded as follows : *Ego pauper Ignatius Andreas, Patriarcha Antiochenus nationis Syrorum, confirmo hanc sententiam orthodoxam, quam explanavit P. Joseph e S. I. dominam nostram Virginem purissimam sanctam Mariam, semper liberam extitisse et immunem a peccato originali, ut explicuerunt antiqui Sancti Patres longe plurimi, magistri Orientalis Ecclesiae.*

The Introit comes from Isaias (Ixi, 10). The prophet in the name of Israel rejoices in the Lord, because he has clothed him with the garments of salvation and with the robe of justice, as a bride adorned with her jewels. This song of triumph cannot be more worthily placed in the lips of any mortal than in those of Mary immaculate, who was never for one single moment throughout her whole life deprived of that glorious robe of salvation of which the Prophet here speaks.

The Collect is in itself a concise but beautifully expressed theological treatise on the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. The ancient rhythm which distinguished the Roman collects of the classic Sacramentaries has been entirely laid aside, but the compiler has desired above all that the *legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi,* as Pope Celestine I (423-32) would have so well expressed himself.

It teaches us, in the first place, that the privilege of the Immaculate Conception of Mary was ordained in the counsels of God in order to prepare an absolutely holy tabernacle for the Word of God, which was to be made flesh in her and by

her· The price which Jesus paid for this privilege is then set forth ; that is to say, the merits of his passion and death, foreknown by the Eternal Wisdom of God, so that Jesus Christ is and always will be the universal Saviour and Redeemer of the whole human race. Mary, the masterpiece of God, is thus the first to participate in a unique and more sublime manner than any other mortal in the grace of redemption.

Lastly, we beseech the divine clemency that by the intercession of so noble and privileged a being, whom God did not permit to be touched by the slightest breath of evil, we also may be granted the grace of a pure spirit, so that we may come to him whom, as the Gospel says, only the clean of heart can deserve to behold.

The Lesson is drawn from the Book of Proverbs (viii, 22-35), but it is to be understood in a literal sense of the Everlasting Wisdom, co-eternal with the Father, by whom God created the world out of nothing.

" The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made anything, from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old, before the earth was made. The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived ; neither had the fountains of water as yet sprung out ; the mountains with their huge bulk had not as yet been established ; before the hills I was brought forth ; he had not yet made the earth, nor the rivers, nor the poles of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was present ; when, with a certain law and compass, he enclosed the depths ; when he established the sky above, and poised the fountains of waters ; when he compassed the sea with its bounds, and set a law to the waters that they should not pass their limits; when he balanced the foundations of the earth; I was with him, forming all things, and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times, playing in the world ; and my delights were to be with the children of men. Now, therefore, ye children, hear me; blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that hcareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors. He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord."

As yesterday at the vigiliary Mass so, too, to-day the Church applies to the Virgin Mother all that the Book of Wisdom says of the eternal Word of God. After Jesus, his blessed Mother, *" termine fisso d'eterno consilio,* and masterpiece of creation by reason of her sublime dignity, is the true first-born of the human family ; so that it may be said with truth that the idea of her as the archetype shone

‘ Dante : *Paradiso,* xxxiii, 3.—Tl.

out clearly in the mind of the Creator, when he formed the world out of nothing·, and predisposed its movements and its story like a garland of glory around the Immaculate Virgin.

The Gradual is inspired by the Book of Judith (xiii, 23 ; xv, 10), who, by her victory over the tyrant Holophernes, is one of the most beautiful types of Mary. Like the heroine of Getulia,[1] so Mary, through divine grace, crushed the head of the proud diabolical serpent and delivered her people from the shame of servitude.

" O Virgin Mary, blessed art thou of the Lord most high, above all the women of the earth. Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people."

The alleluiatic verse is taken from that passage in the Canticle of Canticles where the Bridegroom expresses his delight in the Immaculate Spouse, adorned with every virtue. This Spouse, as St Paul explains, is the Church, but the liturgy applies the verse to the Blessed Virgin, as being the most sublime example of the holiness which adorns the mystic Bride of the Saviour.

(Cant, iv, 7.) " Alleluia, Alleluia, thou art all fair, O Mary, and the original stain of sin is not in thee. Alleluia."

The Gospel is from St Luke and gives us the sublime salutation of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin. The Gospel text, beautiful though it is, does not indeed, when taken by itself, reveal to us all that wealth of grace and splendour which we now discern after the dogmatic definition by Pius IX ; when the light of the Church's divine tradition has illuminated to its fullest extent the salutation of Mary by the angel, and has permitted us to contemplate so great a depth of the mysteries of holiness and grace as we never previously could have imagined.

Blessed art thou among women—that is, blessed art thou above all mortals; separate therefore from the common lot of the children of Adam, whose benediction is barely an antidote against the curse inherited from Eve. Thou, on the contrary, art blessed above all creatures because grace and benediction, as they surround thy Immaculate Conception to such a degree that the deadly serpent is unable to breathe upon it his poisonous breath of sin, so they likewise comfort the last moments of thy earthly pilgrimage, in order that corruption may not touch thy most sacred body which once was the temple of the Author of life.

Gospel (Luke i, 26-28) : " At that time, the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of

[1] Bethulia.

the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, said to her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

The Offertory repeats the angelic salutation, and is almost identical with that of the Fourth Sunday in Advent.

The Secret has a special significance, for the sacrifice which we are about to offer to the Blessed Trinity represents the price at which Jesus bought for his Blessed Mother the privilege of the Immaculate Conception. We too, through grace, are the brethren of Jesus Christ, hence we unite ourselves to him in one and the same love for Mary, who is his Mother and ours, and together with him we present to the Father the fruit of his passion and death as the price at which the privilege that the liturgy' commemorates to-day was merited for the Blessed Virgin.

These are the words of the beautiful prayer: "Receive, O Lord, the saving Host which we offer to thee on the festival of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and grant that, even as we proclaim her to have been free by thy prevenient grace from all stain, so by her intercession we may be delivered from all our faults. Through our Lord."

In accordance with the Roman use, the commemoration of the mystery which is here celebrated by the Church is also introduced into the text of the first portion of the eucharistie anaphora (the Preface). "It is truly meet and just, right and availing unto salvation, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to thee, O holy Lord, Father almighty, everlasting God; and on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mary ever a virgin should praise and bless and proclaim thee. For she conceived thine only-begotten Son by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; and losing not the glory of her virginity, gave forth to the world the everlasting light, Jesus Christ our Lord. Through whom, etc."

The Communion is inspired in the first part by Psalm Ixxxvi, and in the last part by the Magnificat. "Glorious things are said of thee, O Mary; for he that is mighty has done for thee great things." These external glories of Mary will continue to increase within the Church as the years pass on, for they form part of that extrinsic progress of sacred theology and Catholic devotion which are the characteristics of the intense and profound vitality of the family of Jesus Christ.

In the Post-Communion we pray the Lord that, as grace encompassed his most holy Mother in such a manner that her Immaculate Conception was protected from the universal stain of sin, so the Holy Eucharist may be to us also an anti-

dote against the poison which flows in our veins by reason of the death-yielding fruit of Eden.

The degeneration of our human nature, vitiated by original sin, is such that, our intellect being clouded, our will weakened, and our passions unbridled, we cannot indeed hope to attain to the arduous goal. We have need, therefore, of the grace of Jesus Christ, and in order to obtain it we must prepare ourselves to receive it by humility, prayer, and obedience. A tender devotion towards the Immaculate Mother of God is one of the most powerful means of counteracting within us the effects of the *virus* emanating from the fatal tree of the terrestrial paradise.

DECEMBER io

Commemoration of St Melchiades, Pope and Martvr

III id. jan. Miltiadis in Callisti. We find this entry in the Philocalian Calendar for January io, and it was therefore by some strange misunderstanding that the later Roman liturgists, at the end of the Middle Ages, anticipated the feast by a month, substituting the Ides of December for those of January. The annual commemoration of this celebrated Pontiff—the first to gather the fruit of the blood of the martyrs in the triumphal peace of Constantine after three centuries of persecution—only found a place in the Roman Calendar about the thirteenth century.

Independently of the Philocalian *Laterculus,* Damasus also in the fourth century had pointed out to the faithful the tomb of Melchiades, among those of the saints buried in the necropolis of Callixtus on the Appian Way :

HIC · POSITVS · LONGA · QVI · VIX1T · IN · PACE · SACERDOS

Therefore the title of martyr given to Melchiades in the Missal must be understood in a very general sense, as it can only refer at most to the first years of his ecclesiastical ministrations, when the Imperial edicts of the last persecution were still in force.

Under Paschal I, when the Roman cemeteries had fallen into neglect and oblivion, the body of St Melchiades was translated to the Basilica of St Praxedes on the Esquiline, to which the precious marble list of the relics removed thither by that Pontiff still bears witness.

This being the third day within the Octave of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, only a commemoration of St .Melchiades is made. If his Mass happened to be said, it would be the first of those common to a bishop

and martyr: *Statuit.* The Collects are derived from the same Mass.

In the first we confess to God all our shame in the deterioration and want of spirituality which weighs upon us; wherefore we have recourse to the glorious intercession of the martyr, so that he may protect us by his merits, and raise us up to that height of virtue to which God has called us in holy baptism.

In the Secret we beg the divine goodness to accept favourably the oblation which is offered in memory of the great merits of the holy martyr, so that through his intercession the eucharistie graces, which we have acquired here on earth, may enable us to deserve that *perpetuum subsidium* which is the final goal of our pilgrimage.

In the Prayer of Thanksgiving after the Communion we entreat almighty God by the merits of St Melchiades to grant us in their fulness the spiritual gifts contained in that incomparable sacrament of love, to the adoration of which we have already consecrated ourselves through the unbloody sacrifice.

St Melchiades, to a certain extent, stands out as being the Pontiff of the peace and of the victory of the Church; the Pope who set up his own glorious throne in the *domus Faustae,* in the ancient palace of the Laterani, and there inaugurated that long series of councils which shall be throughout the ages the torch illuminating for the Catholic community its path to heaven. Let us also love peace, let us strive to practise it as we are taught in the Gospel, and God will reward us for the sacrifices which we shall be called upon to make in doing so, by bestowing on us the fruits of his own peace.

DECEMBER 11

St Damasus, Pope and Confessor

Station at his basilica on the Via Ardeatina

We know, as the result of excavations and studies made in more recent times, that this celebrated "Pontiff of the Martyrs" was born at Rome in the year 305, and that his father Antonius—who may or may not be the same person as that holy bishop Leo, who was buried in the *Agro Verano* and whose epitaph was brought to light by De Rossi—had passed the whole of his ecclesiastical life in the neighbourhood of the Theatre of Pompey, being employed in the archives of the Roman Church :

Hie pater exceptor, lector, levita, sacerdos.

The mother of Damasus was a certain Laurentia, who lived to the age of ninety-two or thereabouts, and was buried in the Via Ardeatina. Besides Pope Damasus, who in an inscription is called :

Natus qui antistes sedis Apostolicae,

because his father had been a bishop, one of the many rural bishops who at that time were scattered through the *Agro Romano,* this Laurentia had also a daughter called Irene, who was a consecrated virgin.

As a youth Damasus, too, was employed in the pontifical archives, and it was there, probably, that he must first have felt himself called to be the poet of the martyrs, beginning even then his historical researches concerning those heroic confessors of the Faith—as in the case of the martyrs Peter and Marcellinus—researches which were sometimes helped by the oral depositions of the executioners themselves :

Marcelline, tuos pariter, Petre, cognosce triumphos
Percussor retulit Damaso mihi, cum puer essem.

Damasus was elected Pope *in Lucinis,* in October, 366, but in the early days of his pontificate he was opposed by the schismatic party favouring Ursinus, to which a great number of the clergy belonged. When at length the hostile faction submitted to the Pontiff, Damasus attributed this reconciliation to the intercession of the martyrs, and, as a votive monument, he embellished the burying-place of a group of nameless martyrs on the Via Salaria :

Pro reditu cleri, Christo praestante, triumphans.

There is hardly any famous tomb of a martyr in the Roman cemeteries to which Damasus has not paid the homage of his verses, usually engraved in marble, with remarkably beautiful lettering that we owe to the calligrapher Furius Dionysius Philocalus. He was not, however, satisfied with merely composing verses ; he began the restoration and decoration of a great number of tombs of saints, some of which, like that of Eutychius *ad Catacumbas,* had completely passed out of recollection.

Damasus undertook excavations and researches, reconstructed the history of the martyrs, restored them to veneration, and, in some instances, in which it was still a matter of dispute as to whether martyrdom had been endured for the Faith, the Pontiff brought the controversy to an end, and carried out the canonical *vindicatio Martyris.* This seems to have happened in the case of Nemesius whose tomb :

Incultam pridem dubitatio longa reliquit,
Sed tenuit virtus adseruitque fidem.

St Damasus died on December 11, 384, and was buried beside his mother and sister in a crypt built by him on the Via Ardeatina, which the *Liber Pontificalis* calls simply *basilica sua.* His first wish had really been to construct a tomb for himself in the papal crypt in the necropolis of Callixtus. He acknowledges it himself in an epigraph in honour of all the saints who are buried in that cemetery :

Hic, fateor, Damasus volui mea condere membra,
Sed cineres timui sanctos vexare piorum.

Thus, in his humility, he considered himself unworthy of so great an honour, and following a tradition originated by Pope Marcus (337-40), who also had constructed for himself a sepulchral basilica, not far from the necropolis of Callixtus, he prepared his family burial-place near that of Marcus on the Via Ardeatina, and in close proximity to that of the martyrs in the above-mentioned cemetery.

This crypt of St Damasus is mentioned in an epigraph copied by Marini in the eighteenth century, but which has now been lost =

LOCVS TRI
SONVS VIC
TORIS IN CRV
TA DAMASI

The Roman itineraries of pilgrims in the early Middle Ages testify that the body of Damasus was then still in his original tomb on the Via Ardeatina. About the time of Paul I it was transferred to the urban Basilica of St Lorenzo in Damaso, the scat of the ancient pontifical archives, which he had enlarged and which together with the basilica he had desired to dedicate to Lawrence the Cross-bearer of the Roman Church.

The following is the text of the inscription which Damasus himself composed for his own tomb :

QVI · GRADIENS · PELAGI · FLVCTVS · COMPRESSIT · AMAROS
VIVERE · QVI · PRAESTAT · MORIENTIA · SEMINA · TERRAE
SOLVERE · QVI · POTVIT · LAZARO · SVA · VINCVLA · MORTIS
POST · TENEBRAS · FRATREM · POST · TERTIA · LVMINA · SOLIS
AD · SVPEROS · ITERVM · MARTHAE · DONARE · SORORI
POST · CINERES · DAMASVM · FACIET · QVIA · SVRGERE · CREDO

St Damasus, to whom St Jerome in his *Apologia* of the treatise on Virginity, addressed to Pammachius, gives the illustrious title of *vir egregius et eruditus in Scripturis, virgo virginis Ecclesiae doctor,* is, because of his great merits, one of the shining lights of the Church. Besides his extraordinary sanctity, his devotion to the Roman martyrs, the construction of the Vatican Baptistery, and his apostolic firmness in condemning the many heresies which were then springing into existence, to him also belongs the honour, according to the Palestinian tradition, of having introduced the allcluiatic chant into the Sunday Mass. According to St Jerome he was the originator and defender of the new version of the holy Scriptures, now known as the Vulgate. Following the suggestion of St Ambrose, Pope Damasus devoted himself also to the reform of the old psalmodie *cursus,* in order to give a really popular character to this form of liturgical prayer.

Damasus was given the title of saint by his contemporaries immediately after his death. This is shown by the following incription which exists in the crypts of the Vatican :

Longinianus v.c. praef. urb	ET · ANASTASIA · C · F · EIVS
Ad augendum splendorem	BASILICAE . APOSTOLI . PETRI
Pavimentum parietes	ITEM · CAELVM ·
Sacri fontis quem dudum Da	MASVS . VIR . SANCTVS . IN
ea . . . extruxit sumpt	V · PROPRIO · MARMORV m
cultu et musivo opere	DECORARVNT

The Introit is identical with that for the feast of Pope St Sylvester. Holiness and justice are the most beautiful garments that can adorn the priesthood ; these alone are pleasing to God and truly profitable to the Church of the saints—that is, to the faithful.

The Collect is of a generic character: " Hear our prayers, O Lord, and through the intercession of blessed Damasus, thy confessor and bishop, mercifully grant us pardon and peace. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is gathered here and there from various passages of Ecclesiasticus which contain the praises of Abraham, Moses, and Aaron (xliv, xlv). The Lord himself has chosen his Pontiff, and has made him powerful and reverenced by kings and people. He has kept his law, and because he was just and merciful, God has entrusted to him the ministry of reconciliation, in order that he may lead back to him the

people that hath gone astray, and may thus become an angel and minister of peace between divine holiness and wretched sinners.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are the same as those for the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

The Gospel is from St Matthew (xxiv, 42-47). Our Lord exhorts the pastors of the Church, in particular, to be awake and ready to assist their flock in every necessity. They are like servants who have been placed by the Lord at the head of the household to watch over his house and to take care of his family. It is their duty, therefore, to distribute in due proportion the allotted food to their fellow-servants, and in so doing, they give nothing of their own, since the distribution of the word of God and of the Sacraments committed to the pastors of souls is a deposit which has been merely entrusted to them, but which belongs exclusively to God alone.

The Offertory and the Secret are similar to those of the feast of Pope St Sylvester.

The Communion is that of the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

The Post-Communion has a general application. The feasts of the saints are a source of holy joy to the faithful people, who are strengthened by the hope of their powerful intercession. " Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that thy faithful people may ever rejoice in the veneration of thy saints, and be protected by their unceasing prayers. Through our Lord."

As the Prophets in their prayers to God recalled the merits of Abraham, Jacob, and all the ancient patriarchs, so the Christian people profess a special devotion to their holy Pontiffs and Bishops. As on earth these received from the Holy Ghost the office of ruling the holy Church of God, so in heaven their work is not yet finished, for together with Jesus Christ they still offer around the golden altar which stands before the throne of God the incense of their prayers for the entire Christian flock.

DECEMBER 13

St Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

The antiquity of the *cultus* of St Lucy is shown by a graceful inscription in the catacombs of Syracuse. It refers to a certain Euchia, " the blameless one," whose pure and holy life counted scarcely five and twenty years, and who

died " on the feast of my lady Lucy, of whom no praise can suffice."

ΕΥΣΚΙΑ · Η · ΑΜΕΝΠΤΟΣ ΖΗΣΑ (<ra)
ΧΡΗΣΤΩΣ · ΚΑΙ · ΣΕΜΝΑ · ΕΤΗ
ΠΛΙΟ · ΕΛΑΤΤΟΝ · ΚΕ · ΑΝΕ
ΠΑΥΣΕΤΟ · ΤΗ · ΕΟΡΤΗ · ΤΗΣ · ΚΥ
ΡΙΑΣ · ΜΟΥ · ΛΟΥΚΙΑΣ · ΕΙΣ - ΗΝ
ΟΥΚ · ΕΣΤΙΝ · ΕΝΚΩΜΕΙΟΝ
ΕΙΠΕΙΝ · ΧΡΗΣΤΕΙΑΝΗ · ΠΙΣ
ΤΗ · ΤΕΑΙΟΣ · ΟΥΣΑ · ΕΥΧΑ
ΡΙΣΤΟΥΣΑ · ΤΩ · ΕΙΔΕΙΩ · ΑΝ
ΔΡΙ · ΠΟΛΛΑΣ · ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣ
ΤΙΑΣ £

Although the *Acta* of this glorious Sicilian virgin inspire but little confidence, yet as to the veneration paid to her, there is no doubt that it was very widely spread in ancient times. In Rome there were some twenty churches or more dedicated to her, among which the two most ancient are the one within the monastery *de Renati,* restored by Leo III, and another known as St Lucy *in Septizonio,* which is mentioned as a deaconry down to the time of Sixtus V (1585-90).

It would be difficult to account for this intense devotion shown by the Roman Pontiffs to the Sicilian martyr; but it is probable that, in addition to the fame of her martyrdom, two other circumstances may have contributed to it; firstly, that the Sicilian colony in Rome was very numerous—Pope St Agatho (679-82) was himself a Sicilian—and secondly, that from the fourth century onwards the Popes must have been in constant communication with the papal administrators of the vast patrimony of the Roman Church in Sicily. It was probably under this twofold influence that there arose in Rome the numerous churches of St Vitus, St Euplius, St Lucy, and St Agatha, all of them Sicilian martyrs.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xliv, *de virginitate.* " Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity. Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." This mysterious oil is the special glory which those saints have obtained in heaven who have combined purity of the heart with chastity of the flesh.

In the Collect we are reminded, even in the midst of our rejoicing in the feast of the martyr, that the object of these liturgical festivals is to promote our spiritual advancement.

" Graciously hear us, O God of our salvation, that even as we rejoice on the festival *of* blessed Lucy, thy virgin and

martyr, so wc may be taught to be loving and devout towards thee. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is taken from the Second Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (x, 17-18; xi, 1-2). In answer to the Jewish faction who were trying to belittle the influence of the Apostle in the Church of Corinth, Paul protests that he has no wish to seek his own glory, but leaves it to God to commend him among the faithful. If, however, he opposes the wiles of his adversaries, it is because he is jealous of the Church of Corinth, and will not endure that it be unfaithful, for he desires that it should belong to Christ as a chaste and spotless spouse.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse, like the Introit, are also drawn from Psalm xliv, in which are described the beauty and the virtues of the mystical bride of the Lamb. "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity, ℣. Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness. Alleluia, alleluia, ℣. Grace is poured abroad in thy lips, therefore hath God blessed thee for ever. Alleluia."

In the Missal of Pius V, the Gospel Lesson for this day was that of the prudent virgins (Matt, xxv, 1-13), as on the feast of St Barbara. St Gregory the Great formerly preached on this parable to the Roman people, at the station held in the Basilica of St Agnes on the day of her *natalis*. Of little worth will be the decorated lamp of the virgin, if the oil of good works be wanting, and more especially if there be no flame of holy charity. We must not defer the moment of trimming our lamps until we are about to go forth to meet the Bridegroom. The hour of death is uncertain, but what is sure, and to-day's Gospel repeats it, is that it will come unexpectedly, and therefore wc must be always on our guard.

In the latest reform of the Missal the same Gospel Lesson is assigned to the feast of St Lucy as that which we have already seen on the festival of St Bibiana. The prudent merchant is the Christian soul, that gives all it possesses to acquire the pearl of great price, which is Christ. Such is its great value, and nothing less will buy it. We must give all we have.

The Offertory is identical with that of the feast of St Barbara, and is again from Psalm xliv. "After her shall virgins be brought to the King; her neighbours shall be brought to thee with gladness and rejoicing." The image is borrowed from the customs of the East which allowed a plurality of concubines. The Psalmist gives to it a prophetic meaning, foretelling the entrance of the various pagan nations into the Messianic kingdom which is the inalienable inheritance of Israel.

In the Secret we implore the mercy of God that the offer-

ing may be accepted which is here made by the people, in honour of the saints from whom they acknowledge to have already received both protection and help.

The Antiphon for the Communion is from Psalm cxviii, as is usual in the case of saints of the weaker sex. "In vain have the strong persecuted me, for thy word and thy holy fear have filled my bones and have been more powerful over me than all their torments. They deprived me of all things, even of life, but having found and kept thy word, I have rejoiced like one who finds a great treasure."

In the Post-Communion, now that the Holy Eucharist has purified us and made us worthy of the compassionate favour of God,we ask that by the merits of the martyr, whose *natalis* we arc now celebrating, he will grant that we may ever feel the effects of her powerful intercession. She gave all for God, therefore she can obtain all from his heart.

The Gregorian Sacramentary contains also the following Collects for the Mass of St Lucy:

Super oblata.—Quaesumus, virtutum coelestium Deus, ut Sacrificia pro sanctae tuae Luciae solemnitate delata, desiderium nos temporale doceant habere contemptum, et ambire dona faciant, caelestium gaudiorum.

Postcommunio.—Laeti, Domine, sumpsimus Sacramenta coelestia, quae, intercedente pro nobis beata Lucia Martyre tua, ad vitam nobis proficiant sempiternam.

The feasts of the Virgin Martyrs have, as St Chrysostom appropriately observes, a special note of their own, because in such martyrs the victory of Christ appears so much the more glorious, as their weakness and their delicacy are in greater evidence. The revenge of the human race on Satan is thus complete, for the enemy is defeated by woman, who was the first to be overcome by him. If, then, so many young and tender maidens have poured out their blood and sacrificed their life, fearlessly confessing the name of Christ in spite of the fire and the stake, what excuse shall there be for men, if as cowards they yield to the enemy?

DECEMBER 15

Octave of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

This Octave, of which we find traces among some religious Orders and in some particular dioceses from about the fifteenth century, was extended to the universal Church by Innocent XII (1691-1700), and was confirmed by Pius IX. The Mass, as in all the more modern Octaves, is the same as

on the day of the feast, unlike the early Octaves in which each day had special chants, collects, and lessons.

DECEMBER 16

St Eusebius, Bishop and Martyr*

This illustrious champion of the divine nature of Christ died peacefully at Vercelli on August 1, 371. As, however, the anniversary of the dedication of the Basilica of St Peter on the Esquiline falls on that day at Rome, so, when Clement VIII (1592-1605) introduced the commemoration of this saint into the Breviary, December 15, the date of his ordination as bishop, was preferably chosen. Later still, when the Octave of the Immaculate Conception was extended throughout the universal Church, it became necessary to change the date of the feast of St Eusebius and to defer it to the following day.

Although St Eusebius did not actually die a violent death, yet he is given the title of martyr, like many other saints of early times, because as a victim of the Arians, he suffered a long and bitter exile.

The Mass is the Common of Martyr and Bishop : *Sacerdotes Dei.*

The Introit is from the Canticle of the three youths in the fiery furnace of Babylon (Dan. iii, 84-87) : " O ye priests of the Lord, bless the Lord ; O ye holy and humble of heart, praise God."

The ministers of God are here called priests of the Lord, because the Holy Ghost takes such complete possession of their souls at their ordination that he consecrates and sets them apart with a special title, to be the ''men of God'': *Viri Dei.* As the hypostatic union consecrated Jesus as priest and dedicated him entirely to God, *Christus autem Dei,* receiving as such from Isaias the Prophet the mysterious title of " Servant of Jehovah," so in like manner the sacred ministers with whom he shares his priestly dignity are also wholly consecrated and dedicated with him to the Holiness of God : *Sancti erunt Deo suo.*

The Collect is as follows : " O God, who dost gladden us at the yearly festival of blessed Eusebius, thy martyr and bishop ; grant in thy mercy that we who keep his birthday may also enjoy his protection. Through our Lord."

In the Lesson (2 Cor. i, 3-7), St Paul gives thanks to God because in the midst of the heavy labours and tribulations which he endures for the Faith, the Lord does not fail to sustain him with his divine grace and consolation, a consola-

tion so abundant that it overflows from the heart of the Apostle, and pours itself forth upon those of the Corinthians who were ever so dear to him.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm viii : " Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands, O Lord." The Psalmist is here singing the praises of Christ, as the example and pattern of the human race, which finds in him, in his grace and in his glory, its final perfection.

The alleluiatic verse is inspired by the preceding verse of the Gradual : " This is the priest whom the Lord hath crowned." The crown in this present life is the sacred character of the priesthood itself, which stamps on the soul a special conformity and likeness to Christ our High Priest. This sacred character is, in a sense, potential and needs to be exercised and developed. He who in a spirit of devotion performs works worthy of Christ shall have a share in his glorification as supreme priest and reconciler of humanity through his blood.

The Gospel is drawn from St Matthew (xvi, 24-27), and sets before us the paradox of the Christian Faith. He who would be saved must be prodigal of his life ; he who on the other hand cherishes his life and wishes to preserve it, shall lose it. What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? The only way to save it is by taking up the cross of Christ and denying our unruly passions. This is the teaching of the Gospel, this is the spirit of the martyrs, this is the history of Christianity, and the strangest thing of all is that such a doctrine as this which imposes on its followers the renunciation of one's self and of the world, should be the very Faith which has conquered and transformed the world. In this we see the hand of God and the intimate proof of the divine origin of our Faith.

The Offertory, from Psalm lxxxviii, is the same as on the Feast of St Sylvester : I have found my David, the true servant of Jehovah—that is, Christ. I have consecrated him with the unction of the Holy Ghost. My hand will help him and my arm will strengthen him against his enemies and my enemies.

In the prayer which, according to the rite peculiar to Rome, forms a prelude to the consecratory anaphora, we make our petition that God will pour out the gracious blessings of his sanctity upon our sacrifice, and through the prayers of the holy bishop and martyr Eusebius will also grant unto us its fruits in abundance. Such is the mind of the Church concerning the importance of proper preparation for the reception of the holy Sacraments, so that they may be enabled to impart to the soul all that fulness of practical holiness and

Christian life of which they are, as it were, the organs and the arteries.

The Communion comes from Psalm xx : " Thou hast set on his head, O Lord, a crown of precious stones." This crown of glory takes the place of the crown of scorn which was set upon the martyr's brow when, because of his faith, he was cut off by the wicked from among the living.

This must very greatly console us in the afflictions endured by us for the sake of the holy Gospel. When men condemn us, then God proclaims our innocence; when they speak against us, then he gives us his blessing ; when they sentence us to death, then he brings us into the land of the living.

The Post-Communion is common to many other Masses: May this Communion, O Lord, expiate our guilt and cleanse us from the stains of sin, and may the martyr, whose festival it is to-day, intercede favourably for us before the throne of thy mercy, so that the eucharistie remedy may attain in us the plenitude of its efficacy.

Caelestis remedii faciat, esse consortes, we say in this prayer of thanksgiving, which signifies that until there come this last remedy of eternal life, the condition of our life on earth, notwithstanding all possible consolations of grace, will always cause us to reap a plentiful harvest of hardships and tears. We must never try to upset the arrangement or disturb the order of things as appointed by God. There is a time to work and a time to rest, says Ecclesiastes ; so our time of active service in the Church militant must come first, before we can deserve to be crowned in the Church triumphant.

The early historians relate the following ingenious stratagem of Eusebius, by means of which he extricated Dionysius of Milan from the compromising situation into which the craftiness of the Arians had drawn him. Having already beguiled Dionysius into signing the condemnation of Athanasius, they next, at the Synod of Milan in 355, presented the document also to Eusebius for him to add his signature. " How can you expect me to believe that the Son is not so great as the Father," shrewdly said the holy Bishop of Vercelli, " when you have put the signature of my son Dionysius before my own?"

The Arians acknowledged the objection made by Eusebius to be legitimate, and, tearing up the first document, they prepared a fresh one, in which the signature of the Bishop of Vercelli was to come first. Eusebius had obtained what he wanted, for, having seen that the compromising signature of Dionysius was destroyed, he now proposed that they should begin the labours of the Synod by all present signing together the Creed of Nicæa, for he strongly suspected that certain of the bishops were infected with heresy. This brought

matters to a crisis. All the pent-up rage of the Arians was let loose upon the Saint, and after assailing him with abuse, insults, and threats, they banished him to Scythopolis. Eusebius bore it all cheerfully, and shaking the dust from off his feet according to the words of the Gospel, he set forth joyously on the road to exile, as if it were merely one of the manifold duties of his episcopal ministry.

THE NIGHT FOLLOWING DECEMBER 20

XTgil of St Thomas the Apostle

In the Vatican Oratory.

All feasts of the apostles, with the exception of those which occur during Eastertide, are distinguished by a fast on the preceding day ending with the vigil, and the celebration of Mass at dawn on the festival day itself.

The vigiliary Mass of St Thomas is common to all the vigils of the apostles.

The Introit is taken from Psalm li, and shows the expectation of the faithful that, through the intercession of the holy apostles, who made known to the world the name of the Saviour, this sacred name, indelibly impressed on the souls of the baptized, will be to them an effective pledge of eternal predestination. " As a fruitful olive-tree in the house of the Lord I have hoped in the mercy of my God ; and I will wait on thy name, for it is good in the sight of thy saints."

In the Collect we pray thus : " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that the holy festival of thine apostle Thomas, to which we are looking forward, may both increase our devotion and advance our salvation. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is the same as that read at the *pannuchis of* St Andrew during the night preceding November 30.

The Gradual is derived from the nocturnal Psalm xci, but the verses have been transposed and there is consequently no connection between them. " The just shall flourish like the palm-tree ; he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus in the house of the Lord."—This refers to the perpetuity of the work of the apostles promised by the Holy Ghost.—" To show forth thy mercy in the morning and thy truth in the night."—This is the office of the faithful, and it expresses the significance of the present nocturnal synaxis.

The Gospel is from the discourse of Jesus at the Last Supper as related by St John (xv, 12-16). The apostles have been chosen and called from out of the world by a special love on

his part and not by any merit of their own. Jesus has had no secrets from them, for he has transmitted to them all that he *knows,* as the Word of the Father, made man for us. He is about to give them the supreme proof of his love, in sacrificing himself, even unto death ; but all these treasures of grace and mercy are not to cease with the persons of the apostles. The work which Christ desires to establish is to last until the end of the world ; therefore, the apostles and their successors in their turn are by means of their preaching, their charity, and their sacrifice to continue this sublime chapter of the Gospel, continuing in their own persons the life of Jesus, the Saviour of the world.

The Offertory is that of the vigil of St Andrew.

The Secret is truly imposing and solemn. This solemn wording is not to be wondered at, since, if now in our existing ritual the vigiliary Masses represent merely a simple preparation on the day before a solemn feast, somewhat resembling the Greek *preortl,* to the early Christians, on the contrary, the sacrifice offered after the vigil at the dawn of the festival day was a part of the solemnity itself. At first, indeed, it was the true and proper festival Mass, for the *pannuchis* at Rome always implied the absence of a second stational Mass. This explains why the vigiliary Masses in the Gregorian Antiphonary are more beautiful, richer, and more impressive than those of the festivals themselves.

Secret : This is the text of the prayer : " We who offer up to thee these holy mysteries with reverence for the high dignity of the apostleship, beseech thee, O Lord, that through the intercession of thy blessed apostle Thomas, to whose feast we are looking forward, thy people may ever present their vows to thee and gain what they seek. Through our Lord."

The Communion is drawn from Psalm xx : " His glory is great in thy salvation : glory and great beauty shalt thou lay upon him, O Lord." This is the source of the grace and the glory of the saints : *in Salutari tuo,* O Christ the Saviour. Therefore, the honour which is given to the memory of the saints refers to him who made them what they are, just as when praising the beauty of the stars, we arc really praising the magnificence of their Creator.

The Post-Communion is as follows : Be appeased, 0 Lord, we beseech thee, by the prayers of thy holy apostle Thomas ; forgive us our sins, and grant us salvation for evermore."

The Church celebrates the feasts of the holy apostles with the greatest solemnity, because they are the fundamental bases of the whole edifice of our Faith. God, in order to increase among the faithful the influence and renown of the apostles, bestowed on them very great power over sickness,

evil spirits, and the forces of nature, to the end that all these miracles might confirm in the hearts of all believers the Gospel preached by them. As the divine power does not pass away with the years, the faithful will be able to experience the full efficacy of the intercession of the holy apostles, whenever they turn to them with sincere faith. Amongst the various devotions paid by Catholic piety to the saints, that offered to the apostles must surely hold the first place, for, as St Thomas truly observes, they have received the *primitias Spiritus*.

DECEMBER 21

St Thomas the Apostle

Synaxis at the Vatican in the Oratory of St Thomas founded by Pope Symmachus.

The fame of the *cultus* of St Thomas is recorded by the early Fathers, especially by St Gregory of Nyssa, and by St Ephrem, who in Hymn xlii of Nisibis[1] describes the lamentations of Satan, because a merchant had brought from India to Edessa part of the body of the apostle. *" Ululavit Diabolus: Quem in locum nunc fugere possum justos? Mortem incitavi ad Apostolos interficiendos, ut per mortem eorum evadam verberibus eorum. Sed nunc multo durius verberor. Apostolus quem interfeci in India, praevenit me Edessam. Hic et illic totus est; illuc profectus sum et erat illic; hic et illic inveni eum et contritus sum."*

The Greeks celebrate this feast on October 6; among the Latins, on the contrary, the so-called Calendar of Charlemagne of the year 781 assigns it to July 3, in accordance with the primitive Eastern usage which regards that day as the *natalis* of the apostle. The Martyrology of Silos places the feast of St Thomas among the additions made at a later time, on December 21, but in the *Laterculi* of the Martyrology of St Jerome at Echternach and at Wissemburg, the above-mentioned date appears as that of the translation of the relics of the apostle to Edessa.

At Rome the feast of St Thomas dates from the Middle Ages. It is shown in the Gregorian Calendar and in that of St Peter of the twelfth century, but it must be much more ancient, since Pope Symmachus built an oratory at the Vatican in honour of this apostle near the Basilica of St Andrew. The piety of the Middle Ages erected in Rome as many as ten churches in honour of St Thomas, amongst which the most

[1] In Mesopotamia.—Tr.

famous were that of St Thomas in Parione, that *in Formis* on the Caelian, another adjacent to the Lateran Basilica, which was used also as a *Secretarium,* and lastly, the oratory dedicated to him inside the Castel St Angelo.

The incredulity of St Thomas in the first moment after the resurrection of Jesus, and the fact that the account of our Lord appearing to him has been read at Mass on Low Sunday from very early days, have doubtless contributed to make his memory more real than that of many of his fellow-apostles.

According to the *Ordines Romani* of the fifteenth century the Pope used on this day to grant a holiday to the Consistory; indeed, it is still the custom at Rome to begin to-day the sending of the season's greetings to the cardinals and other prelates of the Roman Court.

The Introit is like that of the feast of St Andrew, and comes from Psalm cxxxviii: "To me thy secret counsels *[Fuig-*friends], O God, are made exceedingly honourable: their principality is exceedingly strengthened. Lord, thou hast proved me, and known me : thou hast known my sitting down and my rising up. Glory be."

The Collect is as follows : " Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that we may glory in the solemn festival of thy blessed apostle Thomas ; so that we may ever be helped by his intercession and follow his faith with true devotion. Through our Lord."

The apostles give us a shining example of faith, for they from the first believed that word which they afterwards preached to others, and their faith was so firm that upon it rose up the whole edifice of the Church.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians (ii, 19-22), St Paul compares the unity of the Christian community to a spiritual temple, whose corner-stone is Christ, built upon the unshakable faith of the apostles and prophets.

" Brethren : You are no more strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God : built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. In whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into a holy temple in the Lord : in whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit."

The Gradual from Psalm cxxxviii is identical with that of the vigil of St Andrew: "Thy secret counsels [Pu/g. friends], O God, are made exceedingly honourable: their principality is exceedingly strengthened. I will number them and they shall be multiplied above the sands." The wonderful results of the divine counsels are shown more especially

in the conversion of the world by the efforts of twelve poor fishermen, who had been entrusted with the secrets of the Eternal Wisdom.

The alleluiatic verse is taken from Psalm xxxii : " Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just : praise becometh the upright." Praise becometh the upright because their whole life is in harmony with the words of their lips, whereas Holy Scripture says of those whose works belie their profession : *Non est speciosa laus in ore peccatoris.*

The Gospel (John xx, 19-29) describes how Jesus appeared to Thomas, and records his lively act of faith at the sight of the glorious wounds of the risen Saviour. Thomas saw and believed. He saw the Man, touched the wounds which testified to his human nature, and at once acknowledged his divine nature, proclaiming him his Lord and his God. His profession of faith thus atoned for the guilt of his first incredulity ; nevertheless, Jesus looks for a more prompt and a more sublime faith, which without insisting too much on a rational proof, believes simply because he knows that it is God who speaks and who has revealed the truth.

The Offertory is drawn from Psalm xviii. The Psalmist is singing the praises of the sun, the moon, and the stars, which tell of the glory of God. " Their sound went forth into all the earth : and their words to the end of the world." In the firmament of the Church these brightly shining stars are the holy apostles, whose eloquence still re-echoes through the world.

The Secret is the following : " We render to thee, O Lord, the homage of our service, humbly beseeching thee that thou wouldst preserve in us thy gifts by the intercession of blessed Thomas thy apostle, in commemoration of whose glorious confession we offer to thee the sacrifice of praise. Through our Lord."

The Preface to the eucharistie anaphora *(Vere dignum et justum est . . .*) is that of the Common of Apostles, but in the Gregorian Sacramentary it is thus worded: *A eterne Deus; qui Ecclesiam tuam in apostolicis tribuisti consistere firmamentis, de quorum collegio beati Thomae Apostoli tui solemnia celebrantes, tua, Domine, praeconia non taceamus, per Christum,* etc.

Originally, in the Leonine, Gelasian, and Gregorian Sacramentaries, each Sunday and each festival in the year had its proper Preface. The convenience of the celebrating priests and the desire to economize parchment and labour in copying them out in the Missals of the late Middle Ages, finally caused them to fall into disuse. This was also the case in the sixteenth century with the Sunday Masses, in place of which priests were in the habit of saying the Mass of the most holy

Trinity, because it was shorter, and because they knew it by heart.

The Council of Trent did away with this second abuse, reinstating the Masses proper to the Sunday, and ordering the reform of the Roman Missal. In this reformed Missal, however, with very few exceptions, the ancient proper Prefaces were not included. The one which is now recited for all feasts of apostles is the Roman Preface of the Leonine Sacramentary for the festival of SS Peter and Paul. Indeed, if we read it carefully, we shall notice that it has a decidedly local character and that the beautiful prayer: " . . . we pray thee, O Lord, the Eternal Shepherd, to abandon not thy flock; but through thy blessed apostles (Peter and Paul) to keep a continual watch over it ; that it may be governed by those same rulers whom thou didst set over it as shepherds and as thy vicars." It loses a great deal of its effective beauty when recited out of Rome and adapted to all the feasts of the apostles.

The verse for the Communion is derived from to-day's Gospel, and is similar to that of the Sunday *in Albis:* " Put thy hand and know the place of the nails, and be not faithless but believing." In Holy Communion we touch in spirit the wounds of Christ, and confess that he is truly the victim of our sacrifice of reconciliation.

The Post-Communion is thus worded : " Be present with us, O merciful God, and by the intercession of blessed Thomas thy apostle, mercifully preserve thy gifts bestowed upon us. Through our Lord." Thomas was healed of his unbelief by placing his hand and his finger on the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, in order to teach us that there is the source whence flows the sweet balsam which heals all the diseases of the soul.

DECEMBER 25

St Eugenia, Virgin and Martyr

Station in the Cemetery of Apronianus.

The Martyrology of St Jerome records the feast of St Eugenia, virgin and martyr, on this day at the *coemeterium Aproniani* on the Via Latina. In the Middle Ages, however, this feast used to be kept in anticipation on the F'ourth Sunday in Advent, with its station at the *Apostoleion,* whither her body had been translated. Such was the devotion of the Romans to this martyr.

The Leonine Sacramentary joins to the commemoration of St Eugenia that of the martyrs Pastor, Basileus, Jovinus, Victorinus, Felicitas, and Anastasia, who are also noted in the Martyrology of St Jerome. Jovinus, Pastor, and Basileus

were interred on the Via Latina. Unfortunately the cemeteries on this road are very little known.

St Eugenia, having been converted to the Faith by the martyrs Prolus and Hyacinth, was put to death under the Emperor Valerian, and was buried by her mother Claudia *in praedio suo,* as stated in her *Acta.* Now, as her tomb was certainly in the cemetery of Apronianus, it follows that she must have belonged to the same family. John VII, about the year 705, restored the sepulchral Basilica of St Eugenia, and Adrian I founded beside it a convent of nuns. In later times, that locality, being outside the walls of Rome, had become very unsafe, so Stephen VI translated the relics of the martyr to a special oratory near the Basilica of the Twelve Apostles, where they are venerated to this day.

DECEMBER 31

Synaxis at the Cemetery of the Giordani

To-day the Martyrology of St Jerome commemorates a group of virgins and martyrs buried in the cemetery of the Giordani on the Via Salaria Nova, whose tombs are also indicated in the various itineraries of early pilgrims. The names of the victims have suffered many alterations at the hands of different scribes. They are as follows: Donata, Paulina, Rusticiana, Nominanda, Ilaria, Serotina, and Saturnina. Of them we know nothing beyond the fact of their martyrdom, and of the veneration paid to their relics. Their story remains among the glorious pages of the Church's history, which will be fully revealed to us only in Heaven.

FEASTS IN JANUARY

SUNDAY BETWEEN THE CIRCUMCISION AND THE EPIPHANY

Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus*

In the fifteenth century, St Bernardine of Siena was the apostle of a special devotion to the adorable name of the Saviour, from which the society founded by St Ignatius of Loyola was afterwards to take its name. St Bernardine travelled over a great part of Italy, preaching and showing to the people a small picture in which were painted the initials of the holy name of Jesus surrounded by rays. The preaching of the Minorite was followed by the most remarkable conversions, and everywhere, especially at Siena and Viterbo, the august name of the Redeemer was eagerly engraved on the

façades of private houses and communal palaces. The Franciscans, inheriting the spirit of St Bernardine, continued after his death, and more especially after his canonization, to promote festivals in honour of the name of Jesus, which was already venerated by a special liturgical office in many places in Italy, until at length, Innocent XIII (1721-24) extended this feast to the universal Church, raising it to a double of the second class.

The Mass, although it betrays its late origin—and is liturgically speaking a repetition of that of January 1—is very devotional, and is full of that benign and holy fervour which characterized the Franciscan Order in the Middle Ages.

The most holy name of Jesus is a divine poem, expressing all that is at once most sublime and most lowly in the plan which the wisdom and mercy of God have designed for the salvation of fallen humanity. This adorable name, pronounced first by the Angel Gabriel and then given by Mary and Joseph to the Incarnate Word, was also uttered by Pilate when he sentenced the Saviour to death. Jesus was the outcast of the people, but by the merits of his voluntary sacrifice the Eternal Father appointed him judge of the living and of the dead, and willed that his name should be upon the foreheads of the predestined as a mark of salvation. *Habentes nomen ejus et nomen Patris ejus scriptum in frontibus.*

The Introit (Philippians ii, 10-11) is somewhat similar to that of Wednesday in Holy Week: "In the name of Jesus let every knee bow of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and let every tongue confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." (Psalm viii): " O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in the whole earth, *y*. Glory be."

The Collect, which is modern in form, and is lacking in the rhythm of the *cursus,* is, however, genuinely devotional. We should remember that true devotion to the holy name of Jesus consists in manifesting him by our actions in such a way that they all shall be works of salvation. " O God, who didst appoint thy only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of mankind, and didst command that he should be called Jesus; mercifully grant that we who pay honour to his holy name on earth, may enjoy the vision of him in heaven. Through the same."

The Lesson is taken from the Acts of the Apostles (iv, 8-12).

On the morrow of Pentecost, and after the impressive miracle performed at the door of the temple upon the man lame from his birth, whilst the whole Sanhedrin, perturbed and troubled by the guilt of the deicide, attempts a supreme effort against the disciples of Jesus, Peter fearlessly proclaims the divine origin, the power, and the glory of that

adorable name, there in the presence of those same judges, who, a few months before, had cried out: *Reus est mortis;* and in the very hall where the sentence of death had been pronounced. What a difference between then and now! Then Jesus, his hands bound behind him, stood before them as a criminal; now, arisen from the dead, he sits at the right hand of his Father as judge of the living and the dead. The Sanhedrin adjudged him unworthy to live, whereas God glorifies him by a wonderful miracle and ordains that by his name alone the human race shall attain to the desired salvation.

The Gradual comes partly from Psalm cv, and partly from Isaias (Ixiii, 16), a selection that betrays the modern compiler, who has forgotten that the Gradual, properly speaking, is a psalmodie chant of responsorial form, which always follows the first Scriptural lesson of the Mass.

Psalm cv: "Save us, O Lord, our God, and gather us from among the nations: that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and may glory in thy praise." This prayer is one which the Church, making no distinction between the circumcised and the Gentiles, raises daily to God, that he may fulfil the promise made to the patriarchs and the prophets, and may cause the light and glory of the august name of their Messias, Jesus, to shine also on the unhappy race of Israel, who, worshippers of the golden calf, are dispersed throughout the world.

Isaias Ixiii, 16: "Thou, O Lord, art our Father and Redeemer, thy name is from eternity."

The eternal name of God is his Word, inasmuch as he expresses the Father; but this Word receives in due time, his own name, which expresses all his power, his beauty, and his goodness, and this name is Jesus. Inasmuch as the Word expresses the Father, this eternal name is for the Father alone; but inasmuch as the Incarnate Word is called Jesus, this name is for us, and for us alone.

The alleluiatic verse is derived from Psalm cxliv, in which the Psalmist desires, not for himself alone, to proclaim the praise of God, but that all the earth shall sing his name and sanctify it. *Sanctificetur Nomen tuum.* How shall this be done? By the holiness of our actions.

Psalm cxliv: "My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name."

The Gospel is a repetition of that of January i; since to-day's feast—which became universal during a period when the liturgical spirit had declined—was instituted because the very profound and complex meaning of the solemnity of our Lord's circumcision and the many mysteries connected with it, was too far above the understanding of the faithful to arouse their devotion.

The passage from St Luke (ii, 21) is short, but full of spiritual lessons. Jesus consecrates the Law of which he is the author, by submitting himself to it voluntarily, and by accepting the outward mark of the sons and heirs of the patriarch Abraham. Circumcision is also the symbol of Christian mortification, or, as St Paul expresses it, the circumcision of the heart from all the vanities of life, taking the word it its widest significance. The name of Jesus is not given to the divine Infant until to-day, and then only when by the first bleeding wound in his sacred humanity he has begun the work of redemption through suffering. Such is the law of the kingdom of grace. The only path which leads to glory is the way of the cross.

Gospel : " At that time : after eight days were accomplished that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb."

The Offertory comes from Psalm Ixxxv; " I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify thy name for ever: for thou, O Lord, art sweet and mild; and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee. Alleluia."

The Psalmist is not content here with praising now and again the holy name of God, but he desires to do so continuously and this by his works. For as the man, whose life is at variance with the Faith to which God has called him, dishonours this Faith, and, in a way, blasphemes the adorable name of God which he bears impressed on his heart : *Jugiter tota die nomen meum blasphematur,* says Isaias,[1] so he who acts as the true son of God, who reproduces his image in his own life, sanctifies in himself the adorable name of the Lord.

In the Secret we pray thus : " We beseech thee, most merciful God, that thy blessing, by which all creatures live, may hallow this our sacrifice, which we offer up to thee to the glory of the name of thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that it may please thy majesty and bring thee praise, and may avail us unto our salvation. Through the same." We invoke this blessing not only on the oblations so that the matter of the sacrifice may be worthily prepared, but also on those who offer it, that their faith and charity may render the holocaust glorious in the sight of God, and profitable and salutary to his faithful people.

The Communion, like the Offertory, comes from Psalm Ixxxv, and proclaims the universality of the redemption : " All the nations thou hast made shall come and adore before thee, O Lord ; and they shall glorify thy name : for thou art great, and dost wonderful things : thou art God alone. Alleluia." The name of Jesus is a universal name, because

1 Isaias lii, 5.

the Saviour excludes no one from his redemption, being himself " the head of men and angels," *mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Jesus.*

The Post-Communion is very prolix and involved, but, in general, it is devotionally expressed : " Almighty, everlasting God, who hast created and redeemed us, mercifully regard our prayers ; and vouchsafe to receive with a countenance favourable and kind the sacrifice of the saving victim which we have offered up to thy majesty, in honour of the name of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ : that thy grace may be poured forth upon us, and we may rejoice that our names are written in heaven, under the glorious name of Jesus, as a pledge of eternal predestination. Through the same."

He then, who would be saved, knows what is incumbent upon him to do. The name of each of the predestined can only be that of Jesus, but the name of Jesus living and substantial, like that borne by the Incarnate Word—that is, we must show forth Jesus throughout our entire life. However great our sins may be, we must none of us ever despair of our own salvation, for inasmuch as our Saviour bears the name of Jesus, and the glory of this name is eternal, he will always be the Jesus of the whole human race, and of each one of us in particular.

JANUARY 5

St Telesphorus, Pope and Martyr

The Martyrology of St Jerome commemorates to-day a martyr in Africa named Telesphorus. Subsequently, because of the similarity in their names, Pope Telesphorus was called to mind, and this is the reason why, in the late Middle Ages, his feast found its way on this day into the Roman Calendar.

All that we know with any certainty about Pope Telesphorus, the successor of Sixtus I in the Roman Pontificate, is what we are told by St Irenæus, who, in giving a list of the early popes, makes no mention at all of their violent death, until he comes to Telesphorus, of whom he records : ὃς *καὶ ἐνδόξως ἐμαρτύρησεν.*[1]

Thus Telesphorus towards the middle of the second century *gloriose martyrium fecit,* and his body was laid to rest in the Vatican necropolis, near the tomb of St Peter.

As the Mass of the vigil of the Epiphany is said on this day, only a commemoration is made of the martyr; the first two Collects being identical with those of the feast of St Eusebius on December 16. The Post-Communion is that for St Melchiades on December io.

[1] *Conir. Haer.* III, c. iii ; *P.G.* VII, col. 851.

JANUARY io

St Melchiades, Pope and Martyr

Station at the Cemetery of St Callixtus.

To-day's station, which we have already mentioned on December io, is inserted both in the Philocalian Calendar, and in that of St Jerome thus: *IV id. Jan. Militiadis in Calisti.*

In a future revision of the Roman Calendar, the feast of St Melchiades may possibly be restored to its traditional place.

JANUARY ii

St Hyginus, Pope and Martyr

After Telesphorus St Irenaeus adds : 'Ειτατα 'Yyivos.[1]

This commemoration only found a place in the Roman Missal in the late Middle Ages ; for, at Rome, with the exception of the two Princes of the Apostles, hardly any of the martyrs of the first two centuries had left in early times any trace of their liturgical *cultus.* In fact, the *depositiones Episcoporum* and *Martyrum* contained in the Philocalian *Laterculus* mention only names of popes and Roman martyrs of the third and fourth centuries. As the burial places of their predecessors were for the most part unknown, so the annual station on their *natalis,* which should have been celebrated at their tomb, is not indicated in the ancient *Feriale.*

This omission—perfectly justifiable at a time when the veneration paid to the martyrs was entirely local and connected with their sepulchres, and when also the materialistic ideas of the pagan world around them might have misunderstood the real meaning of Catholic devotion to the saints and regarded it as a new form of polytheism—was repaired by the Church as soon as all danger of misapprehension was over, and the light of the Faith with its golden rays shone throughout the world.

Although our present calendar does not contain them, we must add to the commemoration of St Hyginus several other *depositiones Episcoporum* noted in the Philocalian *Laterculus.* They are the following :

December 8. *Eutychiani in Calisti.*
,, 26. *Dionysii in Calisti.*
,, 30. *Felicis in Calisti.*
,, 31. *Sylvestri in Priscillae.*

[1] *Lee. cif.*

Eutychianus died in 283, and his marble epigraph still exists in the papal crypt in the cemetery of Callixtus :

EYTYXIANOC EIIIC (kotfoc).

Pope Dionysius died in 268, and ancient writers mention two letters addressed by him to Dionysius of Alexandria, and a third to the community of Caesarea in Cappadocia.

Felix I died in 274, and very probably his body was transferred by Paschal I from the cemetery of Callixtus, where it had originally been laid, to the church of St Praxedes.

We have already spoken in Volume I of St Sylvester, on the day of his feast.

On December 22 the Philocalian Calendar also notes : *Ariston in portum.* This is the martyr Ariston of *Portus Romanus* also recorded on this day in the Martyrology of St Jerome. The Liberian *Feriale* enumerates him among the Roman martyrs, because at that time the two towns of Ostia and Portus were considered as forming part of the city of Rome, as the name itself shows: *Portus Romanus.* In a bull of Gregorj' the Great of January 25, 604, respecting the Basilica of St Paul, mention is made of the possessions *monasterii sancti Eristi.*[1] This may possibly be Ariston of Portus.

To these obituary stations we may add, on December 20, the *depositio Zepherini episcopi,* mentioned in the Calendar of St Jerome, and on the following day that of Pope Innocent I. Zephirinus was buried in a small basilica in the cemetery of Callixtus, and pilgrims of the seventh century tell us that his bones were placed together with those of the celebrated acolyte Tarcisius. *Ibi sanctus Tarctsius et sanctus Geferinus in uno tumulo jacent. (De locis SS Martyrum.)*

On January' 3 the Calendar of St Jerome records : *Romae Antheri papae,* whose sepulchral inscription still remains in the cemetery of St Callixtus :

ANTEPOC - EΠI

To-day, because of the Octave of the Epiphany, the *natalis* of St Hyginus is celebrated only by a simple commemoration in the Mass. The Collects are those of the feast of Pope St Melchiades.

[1] *Cf.* B. Trifone *Le carle del Monastero di san Paolo di Roma,* in *Arch. Stor. Soc. Rom. di Stor. Pair.,* p. 280. tgog.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE EPIPHANY

Feast of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph

The first and most ancient Church, Tertullian remarks, is in heaven, where we see in the Blessed Trinity the two essential qualities of our Church; that is to say, unity in plurality: unity of essence, and trinity of persons.

When the Word of God came down amongst us for the salvation of the human race, it was not his intention to adopt a solitary life which would isolate him from the society of men, but, reproducing on earth that which the Blessed Trinity has been in heaven from all eternity, he created, by means of the virginal marriage of Mary and Joseph, the Church of a society or family in the bosom of which he deigned to be born, and to pass the greater part of his mortal life.

The fact that the children of Adam are so closely bound up with the sin of their first father has been the cause of the world's undoing; it is fitting, therefore, that the redemption should come about by virtue of the intimate connection of the faithful with the Redeemer, and that they should experience the fruits thereof through a new and supernatural society, which is the Church.

For this reason, when St Paul speaks of the conjugal bond between Christians, he calls it a great mystery or sacrament, which he at once explains, saying that he refers to that first marriage between Christ and the Church, which is the prototype and model of the marital union between man and woman through the grace of the New Testament. *Sacramentum hoc magnum est; ego autem dico in Christum et in Ecclesiam.* Christ and the Church; this is the mystery or sacrament, which, in its first manifestation, rests on and surrounds the family union of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, of which our Church is merely the continuation.

The Roman Liturgy from old times has devoted the first weeks after Christmas to meditation on the mysteries of the family life of Jesus. Thus the passage from the Gospel describing the finding of Jesus in the Temple among the doctors is appointed to be read to-day. Nor has the spirit peculiar to modern devotion, which prefers the special study of all the details of the great scheme of redemption to the wider synthesis of the early Christians, failed to institute a separate solemnity in honour of the holy Family of Nazareth.

This festival was the more particularly appropriate, because for the last half-century the various sects and anti-clerical

governments, with the object of undermining and suppressing Catholicism in its very foundations, have concentrated all their forces on de-christianizing family life.

In order to neutralize so great an evil, Leo XIII, as a complement to his magnificent encyclical on Christian marriage, desired to set before Catholic families a model for their imitation, and a heavenly protection to which they might have recourse. He therefore instituted the feast of the Holy Family of Nazareth with all its solemn liturgical accompaniment of hymns and lessons, fixing its date for the Third Sunday after the Epiphany.

Following upon this came the reform of Pius X, which in part abolished, and in part transferred to fixed dates, all the movable feasts connected with the Sundays. The feast of the Holy Family was thus swept away by the tide, and only reappeared ten years later when by order of Benedict XV it was assigned to the Sunday within the Octave of the Epiphany. In this case the principle which guided the reform of Pius X was sacrificed, but an ancient precedent existed, of which advantage was taken; the Sunday after the feast of the Epiphany has in the Missal the very same Gospel Lesson as the recently established Mass of the Holy Family. Also in the Calendar of the Copts, on the sixth of the month of Hator (November) we find a feast of the " Flight of the Holy Family from Mehsa Koskuam in Upper Egypt," and on the twenty-fourth of Pasons (May) a corresponding solemnity commemorating the arrival of the Holy Family and their residence in Egypt.

The feast has a distinctly historical character, and differs, therefore, from the idea of our Latin festival; it appears to have derived from the Greeks, who keep it on December 26, under the title of Εὐμα£ι? *τη Θεοτόκου φενγού<Γη ει Αἴγνττττον.*

In the Mencial it is distinguished by this distich:

Ἠκοϊ'τα tt/jos ere, τδν ττάλαι *ττληξαντά* <rc
Αἰγυπτε, *φρίττε, και Θεάν τούτον φρονεί.*

Ad te venientem qui te plexit antea,
Aegypte, metuas atque credas hunc Deum.

The Introit is derived from the Book of Proverbs (xxiii, 24-25): " Let the Father of the Just one rejoice greatly, let thy Father and thy Mother be joyful and let her rejoice that bore thee." This joy and exultation arc caused by the sublime glory and dignity to which Mary and Joseph were raised, a dignity which, consequent on the hypostatic union of the

1 Twelve volumes, one for each month, containing the yearly Office of the Saints according to the Greek rite.—Tr.

Word with the human nature of Jesus, places his most holy parents on an immensely higher level than all other saints.

The Liturgy, in a hymn which is repeated on the feast of St Joseph, asserts that in a certain measure he anticipated on earth the joy attained by the blessed, because whilst to these the vision and possession of God is promised only in heaven, to Mary and Joseph, on the other hand, it was granted, not only to see and possess Jesus here on earth, but even to exercise parental authority and *patria potestas* over him.

The Collect is not drawn up according to the traditional rules of the *cursus.* The compiler has desired to express in it the nature, the scope, and the fruit of the mystery which surrounds the home life of the child Jesus, and has succeeded in doing so, although perhaps not very elegantly. " O Lord Jesus Christ, who, becoming subject to Mary and Joseph, didst hallow home life by singular virtues; by their help grant that we may be taught by the example of thy Holy Family and have fellowship with it for evermore."

The Lesson, which is from the Epistle of St Paul to the Colossians (iii, 12-17), *s similar to that given in the Missal for the Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany. The Apostle is treating of social intercourse between Christians. God is one and is a lover of oneness, wherefore we are called to form one single mystical body, one single family, as we have one only spirit, that of Christ. Selfishness, it is true, threatens this oneness; therefore St Paul, whilst allowing for the inevitable consequences of our poor frail human nature, adds immediately that the necessary condition for obtaining true social and domestic peace is that we should have reciprocal patience in bearing with one another, even as God has patience with us.

The first part of the Gradual is taken from Psalm xxvi : " One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of mv life."

A second verse follows, from Psalm Ixxxiii : " Blessed are they who dwell in thy house, O Lord, they shall praise thee for ever and ever." In this departure from the classical rules of responsorial psalmody, we perceive at once the modern composer who has been satisfied with consulting a volume of scriptural concordances in order to compose his Mass.

The religious Orders, especially those who are bound by their Rule to the daily recital of the divine Office, participate in a special manner in the grace and joy which filled the hearts of Mary and Joseph in their home-life with Jesus. The Holy Family at Nazareth is, so to speak, the mother house

of all other religious families; the habitation where the Incarnate Word of God himself, having become poor, obedient, and humbled for love of us, deigned, together with his parents, to consecrate these three religious vows, founding under the family roof that life and that state, which was afterwards to be known as the " state of perfection."

The alleluiatic verse, instead of being taken from the Psalter, comes from Isaias (xlv, 15). It has been applied to the humble and hidden life of Jesus, under his parents' roof, when the great Creator of heaven and earth, the " Son of the Carpenter," was subject to two of his creatures, and was diligent in learning from his foster-father the trade of a carpenter. What concealment could be found more impenetrable to our reason, and accessible only to our faith?

Isaias xlv, 15 : " Verily, thou art a hidden king, the God of Israel, the Saviour."

Whenever this feast is transferred to the period after Septuagesima, instead of the alleluiatic verse the following Tract is sung: Psalm xxxix, 7-9: ''Sacrifice and oblation thou didst not desire ; but ears hast thou perfected unto me. Burnt-offering and sin-offering thou didst not require : then said I : Behold I come. In the head of the book it is written of me that I should do thy will."

The offerings of the Old Testament had an essentially prophetic meaning. Because of this, in the fulness of time, the Word of God made man came down upon earth, and by the sacrifice of his absolute obedience to the Father, even to the death of the cross, abolished the old Covenant, establishing in the blood of the Redeemer the new Covenant of obedience, no longer servile but filial.

In the votive Masses, which are celebrated during the time of Easter, the modern compiler has chosen his text, not from the classical alleluiatic antiphonary, but from other parts of the Scriptures.

Proverbs viii, 34: " Alleluia, Alleluia. Blessed is the man that heareth me, and that watcheth daily at my gates, and waiteth at the posts of my doors. Alleluia."

Colossians iii, 3 : " Your life is hid with Christ in God. Alleluia." These words of praise, addressed by St Paul to the Christians of the Church at Colosse in general, can be applied to no one with greater truth than to the Blessed Virgin and to St Joseph, who, in their humble home at Nazareth, unknown to the world, passed their life in such perfect union with Jesus, that we may say they drew their breath, their affections, their nourishment, from the divine Son who was all their glory, their riches, the object of all their desires, the life of their life.

The Gospel from St Luke (ii, 42-52) is the same as that

appointed in the Missal to be read on the Sunday immediately following the Epiphany. At twelve years of age, Jesus becomes a " Son of the Law," as the members of the Sanhedrin used to say, so he goes with his parents to the Temple for the first time, to take part in the feast of the Pasch. In order, however, to show his sublime origin, he withdraws himself for a short space of time from Mary and Joseph, who, having sought him sorrowing, find him at last after three days sitting in the court of the Temple, listening to the doctors, and asking them questions.

The attitude of the Child Jesus was such as became his age, he questioned and listened as though to test the understanding of his creatures ; but, at the same time, his questions and observations were such that his divine wisdom puzzled those narrow minds who were confounded in the presence of so great a marvel. *Stupebant, omnes.* The slenderness and youthfulness of his bodily form scarcely veiled the splendour of his hidden Godhead when, to complete the mystery, his most holy Mother by her words made his human nature with the duties attached to it still more manifest.

" Son," she said to him, " why hast thou done so to us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."

It would not have been possible to affirm their parental rights over the holy Child in a more explicit and dignified manner. In these words, Joseph and Mary, whom the holy Scriptures call the Father and Mother of Jesus, ask their Creator the reason for his action, and they were the only persons who could and should do so.

Jesus, then, is truly man, subject to his parents and obedient to them. He acknowledges the Virgin Mary, who has conceived and given him birth, as his mother, and on her account he also acknowledges St Joseph as his father, not that the latter had had any share in the mystery of his Incarnation, but because the eternal Father had willed that St Joseph should represent him in the holy Family, and in his name should exercise as the true spouse of the Virgin Mother the *patria potestas* over the divine Child, for he was not to appear before the Law and the world as a fatherless outcast.

Having, therefore, affirmed and laid great stress upon the dogma of his most holy humanity, Jesus wishes that now, in the sight of his parents themselves, enraptured witnesses and partakers of the mystery of this Epiphany, as we might call it, of his human nature, other rays should shine of a second *Theophania,* that of his Godhead and of his divine nature. He does this, as he alone can do it, by a simple assertion, in which his most holy parents found such fulness of wisdom and light that, like the three apostles on Mount Tabor on a later occasion, they were obliged to screen, as

it were, with their hands their faces from the brilliant rays of that living sun of justice. " Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"

The Gospel says that the doctors of the Sanhedrin, marvelling at Jesus, hung upon his lips, but of Joseph and Mary, on the contrary, it tells us that they understood not the word that he spoke unto them ; because, in this present life, when the light of the intellectual vision becomes too strong, the eyes which are fixed upon God must close themselves, for the mind cannot express in human language that which it sees.

The Offertory is drawn from St Luke's Gospel (ii, 22), where it relates that, forty days after the Nativity, Mary and Joseph took the Child Jesus and brought him to Jerusalem in order to present him to God in the Temple. This oblation, by which the future victim of Calvary was dedicated and accepted, was like the Offertory of a blood-stained Mass, which was to reach its culminating point one and twenty years afterwards, on the Friday of the Paschal Parasceve. Mary and Joseph act as ministers of this first rite, since they represent the whole Church which was later to inherit from Jesus the grace of the sacerdotal hierarchy.

In the Secret the sacred oblation is offered to God enveloped in the incense of the prayers of Mary and Joseph, that, through their merits, God may grant peace and grace to our families. This peace is he himself, who by his own blood has reconciled us with heaven, with earth, and with our own selves. This peace is, too, a free gift from him, therefore we call it " grace," because it is granted to us purely by his love.

The Communion is a verse from to-day's Gospel. Jesus leaves Jerusalem and returns to Nazareth with his parents, there to spend the first thirty years of his mortal life subject to them. This, in one word, is his story, as related by the Evangelist Luke ; *et erat subditus Ulis.* St Luke's master, the great Apostle Paul, had written that Jesus was obedient to the Father unto the death of the cross. The disciple now takes up the same theme and develops it, telling us that this obedience was extended, not only to God, but also to man. In this manner he who is King of kings and Lord of lords, receives from the Holy Ghost in to-day's Gospel the title of *subditus.* What greatness and what depth of meaning !

In the Post-Communion we beseech God of his mercy to give us grace to imitate in our lives the example of the holy Family of Nazareth ; so that, at the hour of our death, Mary and Joseph may come to meet us and bring us into the bosom of that greater family which dwells with God in heaven.

The life of the Catholic Church is the continuation of that of the holy Family of Nazareth ; for Jesus did not found two societies on earth, but only one, of which he was the head, and Mary and Joseph the first members. We must, therefore, frequently look back to our first origin, " to the rock," as the Prophet says, " whence we are hewn,"[1] and seek inspiration from the examples of poverty, humility, and retirement in God which we find in the home life of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

We must here add to the praises contained in the Latin Liturgy, an oriental gem from the Byzantine Liturgy, in honour of the Holy Family of Nazareth. The author is the famous St Joseph the Hymnographer.[2]

Φυλάττουσαν *την llapûeviav ákηρατον, την αγνήν ἴφύλαζα , ἵζ* Æeàs Àoyos *ἰσαρκώθη, φυλάξα Ilαρθίνον* αὐτἵ/ç *μerà γίννησιν απόρρητον, μιθ' ή , θεοφόρζ Ιωσήφ, ήρ.ων μνημόνευί.*

" Thou, O Joseph, foster-father of God, wast the guardian of the Immaculate Virgin, who kept her virginity inviolate. From her the divine Word took flesh, preserving her a virgin after she had become a mother.

" Do thou, O Joseph, together with Mary, remember us."

JANUARY 14

St Felix, Priest and Martyr

Station at St Felix " in Pincis."

In ancient times the devotion of the faithful towards this martyr of Nola was so great that according to St Paulinus, when the day of his feast drew near, the Via Appia was crowded with pilgrims who were journeying from Rome to Nola. Nor was this veneration confined to Italy, since St Augustine used to send his clergy from the distant shores of Africa to do penance for their faults by paying their vows at the tomb of St Felix. Pope Damasus composed in his honour an exceedingly beautiful votive epigram ; and Rome possessed from very early days on the Pincian Hill a celebrated basilica dedicated to the martyr, the ancient family oratory of the *domus Pinciana* of the Anici, in which on this day St Gregory the Great very probably preached a homily.

1 Isaias li, 1.

a Died in 883.

The Mass of St Felix, with the exception of the Collects, is the Common of Martyrs, just as on the feast of St Saturninus. Originally, however, the Lessons were proper to the day, and the Roman Lectionary of Würzburg- of the middle of the seventh century gives as the Gospel Lesson for this feast (St Luke x, 16-20) : " He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me. And he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. And the seventy-two returned with joy, saying : Lord, the devils also are subject to us in thy name. And he said to them : I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven. Behold, I have given you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. But yet rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you ; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven."

Now, the feast of St Felix, in consequence of that of St Hilary occurring on the same day, has been reduced for the universal Church to a simple commemoration ; but should there be a new reform of the diocesan calendar in Rome, it would seem truly opportune to restore the traditional feasts of the Roman martyrs to their former honour, giving them according to ancient liturgical tradition precedence over the other saints of the yearly cycle. The stational churches and the sanctuaries built by the early popes to the memory of the most glorious champions of the Faith would once more be held in due veneration ; a most glorious history of liturgical worship, eminently Roman, would be again brought to light, and the reflection of this brilliance would add new splendour to the Apostolic See.

The Collect is on general lines, but very gracefully expresses the profit which it is for us to draw from the festivals of the saints: " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that the examples of thy saints may rouse us to a better life, so that while we keep their festivals, we may also imitate their deeds. Through our Lord."

The Secret is as follows: ''Graciously receive, O Lord, the offerings dedicated unto thee by the merits of blessed Felix thy martyr; and grant that they may evermore be a help to us. Through our Lord." Some Sacramentaries, however, give a different prayer: " Whilst we offer to thee, O Lord, this sacrifice, on the feast of thy martyr Felix, we beseech thee, that as thou didst grant to him abundant faith *{fidei largitatem)*, so thou wouldst grant us abundant mercy."

Originally the feast had also a proper Preface : *Et confessionem sancti Felicis memorabilem non tacere, qui nec haereticis pravitatibus, nec saeculi blandimentis a sui status rectitudine potuit immutari, sed inter utraque discrimina, veritatis assertor, firmitatem tuae fidei non reliquit.*

After the Communion the following prayer is said : " Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that being fed with life-giving mysteries, we may be helped by the prayers of thy blessed martyr Felix, whose festival we keep. Through our Lord."

It was the sight of the wonderful miracles which constantly occurred at the tomb of St Felix that determined the great Paulinus of Nola to dedicate himself wholly to God, and to the service of the sanctuary of the martyr. Through the zeal of this holy bishop there arose in a short time around the burying-place of St Felix, a baptistery, two splendid basilicas, a monastery, and spacious hospices for the pilgrims who came thither in such numbers from every part of Italy. St Paulinus was in the habit of composing a hymn every year for the feast of his patron saint. Of these a large collection still exists, which no doubt helped very much to spread abroad the *cultus* of St Felix.

Pope Damasus, too, in a touching hymn declares his gratitude to the martyr Felix, who had obtained for him the promise that he should triumph over his calumniators.

CORPORE · MENTE · ANIMO · PARITERQVE · ET · NOMINE · FELIX
SANCTORVM · IN · NVMERO · CHRISTI · SOCIATE · TRIVMPHIS
QVI · AD · TE · SOLLICITE · VENIENTIBVS · OMNIA · PRAESTAS
NEC · QVEMQVAM · PATERIS · TRISTEM · REPEDARE · VIANTEM
TE · DVCE · SERVATVS · MORTIS · QVOD · VINCVLA · RVPI
HOSTIBVS · EXTINCTIS · FVERANT · QVI · FALSA · LOCVTI
VERSIBVS · HIS · DAMASVS · SVPPLEX · TIBI · VOTA · REPENDO

O holy Felix thou, in body and in mind, in heart and in name,
Whom Christ has made to share in the triumph of his saints.
O thou who dost grant all things to those that ask thy prayers,
And dost not endure that any pilgrim of thine turn sorrowing homewards,
Since under thy patronage I have escaped death,
While those who spoke ill of me have perished in my stead,
I, Damasus, thy suppliant, in these verses would render thee thanks.

The Basilica of St Felix *in Pincis* was not very far from the present church of S *Trinità dei Monti.* The anonymous author of the fourteenth century list at Turin of the churches of Rome at that period numbers it among those which were already abandoned : *Ecclesia sancti Felicis non habet servitoreni;* but its ruinous remains are still marked on Bufalini's plan of Rome.

JANUARY 14

St Hilary, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church*

According to St GregOry of Tours, this feast was already kept in that episcopal city on January 13 from the end of the fifth century—that is to say, during the rule of St Perpetuus—but it was not until many centuries later that under Pius IX it was inserted in the Roman Calendar. As, however, the Octave of the Epiphany also falls on the thirteenth, the Office of St Hilary was deferred to the following day.

The Mass is the Common of Doctors, and with a few variations is the same as that of December 7 for the feast of St Ambrose.

The Gradual is derived from Psalm xxxvi : " The mouth of the just shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak judgement." This is the magnificent praise which the Holy Ghost bestows on him who guides the faithful in the path of virtue; but there follow immediately the conditions necessary to the sacerdotal teacher, in order that his words may become truly fruitful : " The law of his God is in his heart : and his steps shall not be supplanted."

The alleluiatic verse is inspired by Ecclesiasticus (xlv, 9) : " The Lord loved him, and adorned him : he clothed him with a robe of glory." Every grace is a gift of love.

The Communion is from the Gospel of St Luke (xii, 42) : " A faithful and wise steward whom the Lord set over his family."

Prudence is the most necessary of all qualities in an ecclesiastical superior. In order, however, that this prudence may not be according to the flesh, which, St Paul tells us, is the enemy of God, it is necessary that its judgements be inspired by the Faith, and that is why the Gospel here describes the servant as being not only prudent, but also faithful.

JANUARY 15

St Paul the first Hermit. Confessor*

The name of this patriarch of Eastern monastic fervour was added at a very late date to the Roman Calendar, for it was only under the influence of a religious Congregation which bore his name and which developed considerably in the AVest after the fourteenth century, that Innocent XI1I raised the

feast of St Paul the Hermit to the rank of a double for the Universal Church. Rome, too, in the sixteenth century boasted of a sanctuary on the \ziminal dedicated to this admirable son of the desert, but this building· has since that time been confiscated and desecrated.

The emblem of the Hermits of St Paul was a palm-tree, for which reason we find in to-day's Mass frequent graceful allusions to this providential tree which furnished both food and clothing to our saint, and which by its spreading branches so truly symbolized in holy Scripture the supernatural energy of the just. The story of St Paul, the first hermit, was described by St Jerome about the year 376.

The Mass, with the exception of a verse from the Prophet Osee, has no proper portions of its own, but is compiled from other Masses of the Common of Confessors.

The Introit is taken from Psalm xci : "The just shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow up like the cedar of Libanus : planted in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God." A vigorous and fruitful life is promised to the just man, because he does not rely on his own strength but on God, who is the one source of life. This is the secret of the success that attends the labours of the saints.

The Collect is worded thus : "O God, who dost gladden us by the yearly festival of blessed Paul thy confessor, grant in thy mercy that we who keep his birthday may also follow the pattern of his life. Through our Lord."

Λ commemoration is also made to-day of St Maurus, son of the Roman patrician Eutychius and first disciple of St Benedict. St Gregory the Great, in his *Dialogues*—a work of such delicate beauty and poetic feeling that in the early Middle Ages it held the place which was afterwards taken in Italy by the *Fioretii* of St Francis—describes most charmingly how, from his early youth, St Maurus had made such progress in virtue, that through the merits of his obedience he walked dry-footed upon the water of Nero's lake at Subiaco. His commemoration in the Missal is not very old, since it dates only from the last years of the Middle Ages. The Collects of the Mass of St Maurus are the same as those of St Sabbas, Abbot.

The Lesson is an extract from the Epistle of St Paul to the Philippians (iii, 7-12), in which the apostle reminds his disciples that, in order to gain Christ and his cross, he has renounced all the advantages of his former social position with regard to the Synagogue ; and that he was of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, a disciple of the Rabbi Gamaliel, a

zealous guardian of the Torah, even to the point of being a persecutor of the Christians. AH these circumstances, in which his rivals would have exulted, were counted as nothing by him, in order that he might seek none other glory than that of bearing in himself the mark of Christ Crucified. This is the only means by which St Paul hopes to share with Christ in the glory of his resurrection.

The Gradual bears a great resemblance to the Introit, but the second verse is quite different : " To show forth thy mercy in the morning and thy truth in the night."

The alleluiatic verse is drawn from the Prophet Osee (xiv, 6) : " The just shall spring as the lily : and flourish for ever before the Lord."

After Septuagesima the alleluiatic verse is omitted, and there is said in its place the Gradual, Psalm, or Tract, which originally followed the second scriptural Lesson on festival days. When in the Middle Ages the historical conception of the origin of the Gradual was forgotten, it was regarded by the liturgists as a mournful hymn of penitence. On the other hand it so happens that the Missal assigns the Gradual only to the Sundays of the Paschal Septuagesima, to a few solemn Lenten *feriae,* and to those feasts of saints which are kept during this period of preparation for Easter. None of the other fast-days during the week has a Gradual—the Psalm : *Domine, non secundum,* recited thrice weekly during Lent, is of later introduction—for the reason that the Gradual still represents in our present Missal the ancient *psalmodia in directum.*

On festival days this psalmody followed the second Lesson, which was always taken from the New Testament—usually from St Paul's Epistles—but it fell into disuse when St Gregory the Great ordered the Alleluia, which at Rome had been confined until then to Paschal time, to be sung at Sunday Masses outside the season of Lent.

St Gregory wished by so doing to raise the Sunday celebration to the same level as that of the Paschal solemnity, of which, from early times, it had been the weekly commemoration. He did not, however, foresee all the consequences of this extension. The feasts of the martyrs were the first to be placed on the same footing as the Sunday ; next came those of Confessors and Virgins, and finally that which had been the original and specially sacred hymn of Easter, the hymn which St John in the Apocalypse places on the lips of the blessed in heaven, became the daily chant of the choir. The Alleluia thus lost all that striking beauty which it had for the early Christians when they sang it at the dawn of Easter-day as the white-robed company of neophytes in union with Christ the conqueror over death issued forth in proces-

sion from the baptistery to draw nigh for the first time to the eucharistie altar of the Lord.

Tract (Psalm cxi, 1-3) : " Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord : he delights exceedingly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth : the generation of the righteous shall be blessed. Glory and wealth shall be in his house: and his justice remaineth for ever and ever." This is the special Messianic praise of the Just One—that is, the Christ, to which the saints have ever striven to conform themselves.

The Gospel is from St Matthew (xi, 25-30). Jesus rejoices and, giving thanks to God, utters the hymn of humility : I thank thee, O Father, because thou hast hidden thy mysteries from the wise and the powerful of this world, and hast revealed instead the Gospel of the kingdom, the ""glad tidings" to the poor. Come to me all ye poor, ye that labour and are weary, and I will relieve you of all your burdens. The world calls those blessed who enjoy its riches, whereas the blessed are those who of themselves take up my yoke, the yoke of humility and meekness, that easy yoke which is the pledge of true spiritual liberty; and which contains the secret of inward peace and joy.

The Offertory is derived from Psalm xx : " In thy strength, O Lord, the just shall joy, and in thy salvation he shall rejoice exceedingly: thou hast given him his heart's desire." Here we see why the praise which the Catholic Church gives to the saints in no wise detracts from the adoration which we all owe to God; for if the Church exalts the virtue of her chosen sons, she still attributes all the glory, praise, and thanksgiving for their excellence to God, before whose throne the saints in the Apocalypse cast down their crowns in reverential awe.

In the Secret we say : " In memory of thy saints, O Lord, we offer to thee a sacrifice of praise : by its means wc hope to be delivered both from present and from future evils. Through our Lord."

The Communion comes from Psalm lxiii : " The just shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in him ; and all the upright in heart shall be praised." This is why the source of joy, of justice, and of glory is perfect confidence in God in heaven. To have confidence in God and to act in such a manner that God may have confidence in us : herein consists ail holiness.

The Post-Communion is thus expressed : " Refreshed with heavenly meat and drink, we humbly beseech thee, O God, that we may be defended by the prayers of him, in whose commemoration we have received these blessings. Through our Lord."

A holy writer has given us a beautiful definition of a saint. A saint, he says, is a Christian who takes the promises of his baptism seriously, as also the nature of the relation existing between the Creator and the creature. This explains why St Paul the Hermit, for instance, was able to endure for nearly a century a life of solitude and penance, yet thought that he was still not doing enough to gain the vision of God in Paradise.

JANUARY 16

St Marcellus, Pope and Martyr

Station at the Cemetery of Priscilla.

To-day's station at the great apostolic cemetery of the Via Salaria is indicated not only in the Calendar of St Jerome, but also in the Philocalian *Laterculus* of the time of Pope Liberius: *XVII kal. febr. Marcelliani) in Priscillae.*

The *Acta* of St Marcellus (308-9) contain curious interpolations. We know from Pope Damasus, who composed the sepulchral inscription of the saint, that the latter having admitted apostates to the sacrament of penance and reconciled them to the Church, such a tumult among the people was raised in Rome by his adversaries—that is, the austere, obstinate, and heretical party, that in consequence some lives were lost. The tyrant Maxentius then intervened and, on the score of these disorders, condemned Marcellus to exile, from the trials of which he subsequently died. His body was carried to Rome and buried in the cemetery of Priscilla, whence it was transferred to the *titulus Marcelli* on the Via Lata.

This " title " goes back to the fourth century, and according to the *Gesta Marcelli* was originally established in the *domus of* a pious matron, Lucina or Novella by name, who had made a gift of it to the Pope. Maxentius, having heard of this, was very angry, and gave orders that the church should be pulled down and turned into a public *catabulum,* commanding further that Marcellus himself, as a public slave, was to be given the duty of looking after the horses at the first stage on the Xzia Flaminia. The Pope, exhausted by privation and ill treatment, is said to have succumbed soon afterwards to these hardships.

This account in the *Gesta* is unfortunately not confirmed by the epigraph composed by Pope Damasus, who gives quite a different account of the death of the famous Pontiff. XVe have here another instance of the great caution necessary in dealing with the ancient legends of the saints, so as to avoid causing any harm:

VERIDICVS · RECTOR · LAPSOS · QVIA · CRIMINA · FLERE
PRAEDIXIT · MISERIS · FVIT · OMNIBVS · HOSTIS · AMARVS
HINC · FVROR · HINC · ODIVM · SEQVITVR · DISCORDIA · LITES
SEDITIO · CAEDES · SOLVVNTUR · FOEDERA · PACIS
CRIMEN · OB · ALTERIVS · CHRISTVM · QVI · IN · PACE · NEGAVIT
FINIBVS · EXPVLSVS · PATRIAE · EST · FERITATE · TYRAMNI
HAEC · BREVITER · DAMASVS · VOLVIT · COMPERTA · REFERRE
MARCELLI · VT · POPVLVS · MERITVM · COGNOSCERE · POSSIT

Because he, as a true Pastor, gave absolution to those who had fallen,
He became an adversary displeasing to all evildoers.
Hence arose anger, hatred, discord, and contention,
Sedition and murder ; the bond of peace was broken,
By the wicked deeds of one who in time of peace denied Christ.
(The Pastor) was driven out from his paternal roof by the Tyrant's rage.
Damasus, to whom all this was well known, desired to relate it briefly
In order that the people might learn the true worth of Marcellus.

We know from the epigraph written by Damasus for the successor of Marcellus, Pope Eusebius, that the head of the heretical Donatist party at Rome was a certain Hcraclius, who succeeded in provoking a riot also under Pope Eusebius. This time Maxentius expelled from the city both the disputants, and Eusebius, like Marcellus, *litorc Trinacrio mundum vitamque reliquit.*

The Mass is that of a Martyr and Bishop; but Marcellus, not having died a violent death, was formerly venerated at Rome as a Confessor in the true and original meaning of the word. In fact the Gospel lists of the Wurzburg Codex assign for to-day the Lesson from St Matthew xxv : *Homo peregre proficiscens,* of the Common of Confessors, to which Lesson the antiphon for the Communion : *Euge, serve bone,* still retained in our present Roman Missal also refers.

The Introit is derived from Ecclesiasticus (xlv, 30), in which passage the mighty Phinees is highly praised : " The Lord made to him a covenant of peace, and made him a prince ; that the dignity of priesthood should be to him for ever." The sacerdotal office is truly a mission of peace and reconciliation, hence the ministers of the sanctuary must aspire with the greatest zeal to the dignity of " seekers after peace " in order that this celestial peace whose source is in Christ—*ipse est pax nostra*—may flow and be diffused by means of the sacred

hierarchy through all the members of the body of the Church. This is the reason why St Paul in his Epistles desires for the faithful first grace, then peace, as the immediate effect of grace. The salutation of the bishop to the people in the Mass contains also to-day this desire for peace : *Pax vobis,* the apostolic greeting which we so often see engraved on the most ancient tombs in the Roman cemeteries.

The Collect is very fine; in it we invoke the merits of the sufferings and humiliations of Marcellus, that they may supplement our insufficiency : " Mercifully hear, O Lord, we beseech thee, the prayers of thy people, that we may be helped by the merits of blessed Marcellus thy martyr and bishop, in whose martyrdom we rejoice."

The Lesson is taken from the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (i, 3-7), where St Paul explains to his followers that although he is at that time more than ever oppressed by external persecutions, and harassed by the schisms which rend the Church at Corinth, yet the divine consolations which fill his soul are so numerous that he must pour out their abundance into the hearts of his beloved disciples. This is the rule which guides the true pastor. If he suffers, he does so for the good of his flock ; if he is comforted, it is also for their consolation.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are the same as for the feast of St Nicholas.

The Gospel is that appointed for the feast of St Eusebius of Vercelli on December 16.

The Offertory is from Psalm Ixxxviii : " My truth and my mercy shall be with him ; and in my name shall his horn be exalted."

The Secret is the following : " Graciously receive the offerings made to thee, O Lord, we beseech thee ; and through the merits of blessed Marcellus thy martyr and bishop grant that they may become a help to our salvation."

In the Gregorian codices the title of martyr is omitted from this prayer for the reasons given above. The same idea is better expressed in the Preface formerly assigned to this festival station : *Qui glorificaris in tuorum confessione sanctorum, et non solum excellentioribus praemiis martyrum tuorum merita gloriosa prosequeris, sed etiam sacra Mysteria competentibus servitiis exsequentes, gaudium Domini su: tribuis benignus intrare. Per Christum.*

The Communion, which is identical with that of St Peter Chrysologus, is now no longer in keeping with the Gospel Lesson, but it was so originally, and harmonized beautifully with the last words of the proper Preface.

The Post-Communion is that of the feast of St Lucy. Jesus redeemed the world, not so much by the glory of his miracles

and of his preaching as by the ignominy and suffering of his passion. Therefore, he does not spare to the pastors of souls humiliations and sorrows, that they too may, according to St Paul's phrase, accomplish in their members that which is wanting on their part to the passion of Christ for the good of the Church.

JANUARY 17

St Anthony, Abbot *

The name of this celebrated patriarch was first made popular in Rome by St Athanasius, who, as he described his virtues and miracles to the descendants of the Scipios and the Gracchi in the house of Marcella on the Aventine, awoke in them a love for the monastic life. Nevertheless, the feast of St Anthony did not find a place in the Roman Calendar until much later, when in consequence of the disease commonly known as the holy fire or St Anthony's fire, a great number of hospitals and chapels called after him arose throughout France and Italy.

In Rome, there were several churches dedicated to the saint ; those, for instance, near the Mausoleum of Hadrian, on the Ripetta, and in the *Forum Romanum,* but the most celebrated was that one on the Esquiline—the ancient Basilica of St Andrew, formerly of Junius Bassus, and afterwards dedicated to the great patriarch of Egyptian monasticism—which stood near St Mary Major. Attached to it was a hospital in which St Francis of Assisi, amongst others, found a temporary refuge in the time of Innocent III.

The Mass is the Common of Abbots, just as for the feast of St Sabbas.

JANUARY 18

St Prisca, Virgin and Martyr

Station at the "Titulus Priscae."

In our present Missal there is kept to-day the more recent feast of St Peter's Chair at Rome, which was instituted by Paul IV (1555-59) under the influence of the traditions of the Gallican Liturgy to the detriment of the Roman. This later feast has superseded that of St Prisca, the titular saint of one of the most ancient basilicas on the Aventine, whose Mass appears in the Gregorian Sacramentary, and in all the Roman Calendars of the Middle Ages. The ancient itineraries of the pilgrims pointed out the original tomb of the martyr in the

cemetery of Priscilla on the Via Salaria. Later on—that is, at the time when there took place the general translation of the bodies of the saints into the city itself from outside—the holy relics of Prisca—perhaps because she bore the same name as the titular saint of the basilica on the Aventine—were transferred thither.

It is not, however, possible to discover any connection between Prisca, the martyr of the third century, her namesake, the wife of Aquila, who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and the Priscilla after whom the cemetery is named. Have we here two or three Priscas or Priscillas? The circumstance is by no means a solitary one ; indeed, the similarity which obtained so often in Rome among the names of the founders of the ancient urban titles, and those of the martyrs of the suburban cemeteries, was the reason which decided the popes in the ninth century to transfer the relics of these martyrs to the basilicas of the same name. It was in this way that the *titulus Balbinae,* after the body of the saint of that name had been brought thither, became the *titulus sanctae Balbinae ;* the *titulus Sabinae* that of *sanctae Sabinae ;* that of Prisca, the *titulus sanctae Priscae,* and the same in many other instances.

Eadmer relates in the Life of St Anselm, that when the tomb containing the body of St Prisca was opened at Rome, Wala, Bishop of Paris, asked for and obtained a portion of the skull, a fragment of which he gave to the biographer of the holy Doctor. Eadmer, having complained that the relic was not large enough, St Anselm said to him : " Take the utmost care of your treasure, for you may be quite sure that on the day of the resurrection all the gold in the world will not prevent the martyr from claiming that piece of bone which you have now obtained."

In the Middle Ages the name of Aquila was combined with that of Prisca, so that in the *Liber Pontificalis* the title is described as the *titulus beatorum Aquilae et Priscae.* In any case, it is necessary to distinguish Prisca, the martyr of the cemetery of Priscilla mentioned under this day in the Calendar of St Jerome, *Romae, Via Salaria. Priscillae,* from Priscilla, the wife of Aquila and disciple of St Paul, who lived some two centuries earlier.

The Mass, with the exception of the Collects, is the same as that of St Bibiana on December 2.

The following prayers are to be found in the Sacramentary of Adrian.

Collect: ‘‘Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who celebrate the birthday of blessed Prisca, thy virgin and martyr, may both rejoice in her yearly festival, and also profit

by the example of so great a faith." This is the benefit which we are to derive from the feasts of the martyrs : Christian fortitude to live in conformity with our baptismal vows, so that our whole life may be, if not a bloody, yet at least a stern and painful confession of the Gospel of Christ.

The Gospel from St Matthew (xiii, 44-54) is already noted in the Würzburg List.

Secret : " May this sacrifice, we beseech thee, O Lord, which we offer in commemoration of the festivals of thy saints, loose the bonds of our wickedness, and procure for us the gifts of thy mercy."

Post-Communion : " Replenished with saving mysteries, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we may be helped by the prayers of her whose festival we keep." This is the marvellous effect of the Communion of saints. Here on earth, we venerate their tombs and offer the holy Sacrifice over their sacred bones in memory of them, whilst they in heaven plead the cause of their less distinguished brethren and so become our advocates.

How high a vocation is that of martyrdom ! What a happy exchange—to give the remainder of a wretched life in order to obtain the true unending life in God ! What supreme bliss —to close one's eyes on the sorrows of the world and to open them a moment after in the heavenly Jerusalem, and to drink at the very source of divine beatitude ! The Church places great confidence in the intercession of the martyrs, because having given all to God without reserve, his heart can refuse them nothing.

JANUARY 18

St Peter's Chair when he first fixed his Seat at Rome*

The early history of this feast is lost in the shadows of the catacombs, and in spite of recent studies it is still impossible to say that all which is doubtful and obscure therein has been solved. From the third century at least, there was venerated at Rome, in that cemetery district lying between the Via Salaria and the Via Nomentana, the memory, symbolized probably by a chair carved in wood or in tufa, of the apostolic ministry which St Peter exercised at that spot. Beside this place lamps were kept burning, and the pilgrims of the sixth century, when visiting it, were in the habit of carrying home with them as objects of devotion flocks of tow or cotton which had been dipped in the perfumed oil of the lamps. Later we find the *sella gestatoria apostolicae confessionis,* as Ennodius calls it, in the Baptistery of Damasus in the Vatican, so that it

was said of Pope Siricius, the successor of Damasus : *Fonte sacro magnus meruit sedere sacerdos.*

Whilst, however, at Rome the *Natalis Petri de Cathedra* is entered in the Philocalian Calendar on February 22 as early as the fourth century, the Gallican churches, in order perhaps to avoid keeping this feast in Lent, were in the habit of anticipating- it on January 18. The two uses continued to flourish independently side by side for several centuries, until at last their origins became confused outside of Rome, and instead of one chair of Peter, two were commemorated, of which one was attributed to Rome, that of January j8, which was already firmly established in Gallic territory, while the other, after being connected with various places, was finally adjudged to Antioch.

The Rome of the Middle Ages neglected for some time the *Natalis Petri de Cathedra,* perhaps when the chair was removed from its original place, and brought to the Vatican ; or still more probably when it became customary to celebrate solemnly with an almost similar intention the *Natalis Ordinationis* of the Pope, a feast which brought every year a great concourse of bishops to Rome. The fact remains that the feast is altogether missing in the Roman Sacramcntaries, and reappears only on the traditional date in the calendars of the eleventh century and the later *Ordines Romani.* Urban VI (1378-89) wished to restore the feast to its ancient place of honour, and ordered that on that day one of the cardinals should preach a sermon to the people at the Papal Mass at the Vatican. But the ardent zeal of the Pontiff led to no permanent result, and it was only in 1558 that Paul IV again ordained the celebration of the festival of the *Cathedra S Petri qua primum Romae sedit* on January 18, in accordance with the Gallican tradition.

The venerated relic of the Chair of St Peter is no longer kept in the baptistery as in the fifth century, but in the apse of the Vatican Basilica, of which it forms one of the most precious treasures. It now consists of a few wooden boards only, but from early times it has been lined with storied ivory panels. The Renaissance did not appreciate the profound dogmatic significance of that chair at such time as the Roman Pontiffs actually took their seat thereon. The grandiose art of Bernini has enclosed the precious relic in a colossal reliquary, and the result has been that the Pope can no longer sit, as did the Pontiffs of the first fifteen centuries, on his true and historic chair, that which Prudentius described simply as : *Cathedra Apostolica.*

The Introit is the same as on the feast of St Nicholas.

The following Collects with slight alterations are to be

found in the so-called Gelasian Sacramcntary for the *natalis* of St Peter.

In early times, devotion towards the apostles, and St Peter in particular, was imbued with so high a conception of the power of the keys that they were constantly invoked for the remission of sins in the hymns, the collects, and the responsories.

Collect : " O God, who in delivering to thy blessed Apostle Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, didst confer on him the pontifical power of binding and loosing, grant that by the help of his intercession we may be loosed from the bonds of our sins."

In accordance with the primitive Roman custom, every time that the commemoration of St Peter was celebrated, that of St Paul is made to follow it immediately, and *vice versa,* since as an ancient antiphon says : *quomodo in vita sua dilexerunt se, ita et in morte non sunt separati.*

The following Collect is found also in the Gregorian Antiphonary : " O God, who by the preaching of the blessed Apostle Paul didst teach the multitude of the Gentiles ; grant, we beseech thee, that we who keep his memory may also enjoy his patronage."

The Lesson is a passage from the First Epistle of St Peter (i, 1-7) to the churches of Asia Minor, written soon after the burning of Rome, when the first great executions of the Christians in the Vatican gardens by order of Nero had begun. St Peter tranquilly exhorts the faithful to endure bravely the trial by fire, for thus shall the gold of their faith be refined in expectation of the day of the *parousia,* when, instead of the Divus Nero, charioteer, incendiary, and matricide, there shall appear in his glory Christ Jesus, to bestow on the faithful the fruit of their sufferings and the reward of their hope.

The Gradual from Psalm cvi is taken from the Gallican rite, and is recorded in the Breviary under this day in the sermon attributed to St Augustine, but which was really composed by an anonymous Gallican bishop in very early times: *Unde convenienter psalmus qui lectus est dicit: exaltent eum in ecclesia plebis et in cathedra seniorum laudent eum:* " Let them exalt him in the church of the people : and praise him in the chair of the ancients. Let the mercies of the Lord give glory to him ; and his wonderful works to the children of men." God looks with very great favour on liturgical prayer, as well as on that which we offer him in private ; for the former by its social character fully corresponds to man's nature, and reflects faithfully the mind of the Church.

The alleluiatic verse (Matt, xvi, 18) is as follows; " Alleluia, alleluia. Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my

Church. Alleluia." As the foundation sustains the whole mass of the building, so that Church which rests upon the authority and faith of Peter always living and visible in his successors, is the true Church founded by Jesus Christ.

After Septuagesima the alleluiatic verse is omitted, and instead there is sung the Tract (Matt, xvi, 18, 19), which, however, is not to be found in any ancient Sacramentary, and which by its structure gives evidence of a very late origin. Indeed, instead of being drawn, according to rule, from the Psalter, the favourite hymnal of the Church, it consists of verses from the Gospel of St Matthew, the reading of which was formerly reserved by the faithful out of religious respect exclusively to the deacon on the ambo.

Tract : " Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven."

The gates of hell are typical here of the power of the prince of darkness, for among the Jews of old judicial meetings were often held at the gates of the city. The gates of Hades arc here placed in contrast to the gates of which Peter holds the keys. Therefore we must understand also in this latter case that the gates of the kingdom of heaven signify the power and hierarchical authority of which Peter is the direct recipient, and which he exercises by divine institution over the whole Church of Christ.

This is, in fact, the difference between the authority of the pope and that of the other patriarchs, metropolitans, etc. We do not read anywhere in the Gospel that the latter ever exercised jurisdiction over other bishops ; whereas we know, on the contrary, that at various times they have been granted this prerogative by the authority of a council or of a pope. On the other hand, the Gospel describes in a solemn and explicit manner the universal authority granted by our Lord to St Peter.

History, for its part, demonstrates that, from the period immediately following the apostolic age, the Roman Pontiffs, without any opposition on the part of the Church, have as a matter of fact exercised their primacy of jurisdiction as a ministry enjoined to them by Christ, in the words spoken to Peter, so that even from a purely historical point of view we must exclude the hypothesis of a period in which this primacy might have been instituted through human agencies. Nav, history does indeed contain documentary evidence of the exercise of the papal primacy, but its institution is contained in the Gospel itself.

To-day the Gospel Lesson (Matt, xvi, 13-19) contains the narrative of the institution of the pontifical primacy, a thought which pervades the whole Mass. Jesus, whilst he announces to Peter the glories attached to the spiritual power of the papacy, foretells also the combat that it will have to wage throughout the ages. The "gates of hell" are not represented only by the impious of this world, but also by the leaders of the infernal hosts, the anti-Christian governments and authorities who will make every effort to destroy the divine edifice built upon Peter, but will never succeed in so doing. The whole story of Christianity through twenty centuries is announced here in a few verses of the Gospel.

The Offertory (Matt, xvi, 18, 19), contrary to the classical tradition of Rome, is derived from the preceding passage of the Gospel instead of from the Psalter; still we can willingly forgive the Gregorian artist who composed the splendid antiphonal music of this Mass the slight liberty which he has taken. The idea of the building of the Church on the foundation of Peter had justly taken such complete possession of him, that he has given free scope to his genius, and in the Tract, the Offertory, and the Communion, he clothes the words of Jesus to Peter with ever new and ever beautiful melodies. We should pay heed to the phrase *non praevalebunt,* which in the Gospel narrative of the institution of the Primacy, while for us it represents the ecclesiastical history of more than nineteen centuries, for the adversaries of the Church contains also the prophecy of that which is to come. Neither persecutions from without, nor the weakness and inability of her ministers within, shall ever be able to uproot the religion of Christ.

Offertory (Matt, xvi, 16): "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven."

The Secret is in these words: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that the prayer of blessed Peter thy apostle may commend to thee the prayers and sacrifices of thy Church, that what we celebrate in his honour may avail for our pardon."

The eucharistie Sacrifice, as St Augustine observes, is offered to God alone, One in Three Persons, but it is celebrated in memory of the saints, in order to render thanks to the august Trinity for having raised them to such heights of merit and glory. The Liturgy expresses this thought in a beautiful Collect during Lent: *In tuorum, Domine, pretiosa morte justorum, sacrificium illud offerimus, de quo martyrium sumpsit omne principium.*

The Prayer which commemorates St Paul is exceedingly graceful: "Sanctify, O Lord, the offerings of thy people

through the prayers of Paul thy apostle; that those things which are pleasing to thee by thine own institution may become yet more pleasing to thee by his patronage and intercession."

The eucharistie Sacrifice, pleasing to Jesus who instituted it, and who, as heir to the Messianic promises, first participated in it, becomes to-day yet more acceptable to the divine Majesty, because with it are joined the prayers of him whose Epistles, second only to the holy Gospels, were the means of divine revelation, explaining to the churches the whole mystery of life and death, of humiliation and glory which is hidden under the white veil of the Sacrament.

The Preface is that of the apostles, originally Proper to the feast of SS Peter and Paul.

The verse for the Communion (Matt, xvi, 18) is identical with the alleluiatic verse.

The only legitimate Eucharist, therefore, is that which is offered in Communion with the Roman Pontiff, whose name has been commemorated in the anaphora from the earliest centuries. To omit the name of the pope in the Mass was, in the eyes of Ennodius of Pavia, to offer, in defiance of ancient tradition, a maimed and incomplete sacrifice: *sine ritu catholico et cano more, semiplenas nominatim hostias.*

After the Communion the following prayer is said: "May the sacrifice we have offered fill us with joy, O Lord; that as we proclaim thee wonderful in thy apostle Peter, we may receive through him the fulness of thy pardon." The pardon of our sins is here joined with holy Christian joy, because it is our guilt which dries up the sources of joy in the *gaudium sancti Spiritus* of which the apostle speaks.

This second prayer is said in commemoration of St Paul: "We who have been sanctified by this healthful mystery, beseech thee, O Lord, that we may ever enjoy the intercession of him by whose patronage thou hast granted us to be guided." This prayer from the Leonine Sacramentary refers especially to Rome, for she alone can boast of the glory of having been committed to the special patronage of the two princes of the apostles, who, together with the treasure of their preaching and of their blood, bequeathed to her the prerogatives of their apostolate and of the primacy over all other churches.

The Pontifical Primacy is the polar star which guides the barque of the Church across the treacherous and stormy ocean of time. Bishops, patriarchs, entire nations, once glorious and believing, have many times made grievous shipwreck of their faith; indeed, the Scriptures tell us that in the last era of the world many false prophets and pseudo-Christs shall appear, who will endeavour to mislead the multitudes, even

working false miracles to confirm their errors. If, then, we cannot trust anyone, since all are liable to err, from whom must we seek safety in this supreme matter of our eternal salvation, if not from Peter? His faith, as we know on the testimony of our divine Redeemer himself, can never fail, and the sheep which Peter recognizes as belonging to his fold, will be recognized and admitted as such also by Jesus Christ the chief Shepherd.

JANUARY 19

SS Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abachum, Martyrs

Station at the Cemetery "ad Nymphas."

This group of Persian martyrs, consisting of husband, wife, and two sons, now buried, some at the deaconry of St Adrian and some at the title of St Praxedes, were originally interred *ad nymphas Catabassi,* at the thirteenth milestone of the Via Cornelia. Their *Acta* appear to have been added to considerably, and their feast, which is not found in the ancient Roman Sacramentaries, occurs for the first time in a Vatican Calendar of the twelfth century. The reason of this silence is probably to be found in the circumstance that before the time of Paschal I these martyrs who were buried in a property at a great distance from Rome were not considered as being Romans at all, and therefore the city had no reason for celebrating their feast. It is very likely that the first insertion of this festival in the Roman Calendar occurred at the time of the translation of their bodies to St Praxedes.

The Mass is quite ancient in its essence and evidences a period of the very best liturgical taste.

The Introit comes from Psalm Ixvii, and describes the *refrigerium* or heavenly banquet which God prepares for his martyrs; for those, that is to say, who for love of him suffered hunger and thirst after righteousness in this world, and have been ill-treated from hatred of the name of Christ: "Let the just feast and rejoice before God: and be delighted with gladness. Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered: and let them that hate him flee from before his face. y. Glory."

In the Collects which follow, as in many other ancient prayers, to-day's martyrs are not even mentioned by name. In this they differ from the modern collects which prefer to include the whole biography of a saint in a few short lines. The reason of this is, that the early compilers, without dwelling too much on particulars, dearly loved great theological

syntheses, and never separated the individual from the entire company of the saints, and from Jesus Christ the fount and centre of all sanctity.

Collect : " Hear thy people, O Lord, who humbly pray through the intercession of thy saints, that by thy grace we may enjoy peace during our temporal life and also help for life everlasting."

In the passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews (x, 32-38), the apostle draws a very sad, melancholy picture of that which the profession of the Christian faith meant in the times of the martyrs. The faithful, besides the inner warfare which they waged with their passions, had been deprived of all their possessions, loaded with chains, and exposed to the mockery of Jews and pagans. It is faith that strengthens their hearts; so the martyrs die in quiet expectation of him who without delay will come to establish his kingdom which shall have no end. Indeed, this present time of tribulation in comparison with eternal blessedness is but a brief instant, *modicum aliquantulum,* during which the just man lives by faith, hope, and charity.

The Gradual is drawn from the Book of Wisdom (iii, 1-3) : " The souls of the just are in the hand of God ; and the torment of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die . . . but they are in peace." They seemed to die in torments, and with their life to lose everything; but in truth they enjoy a profound peace in their hearts, since, because of their hope, they already possess the firstfruits of immortality.

The alleluiatic verse, like the Introit, comes from Psalm lxvii : " God is wonderful in his saints." God is wonderful in his sanctuary where he has set up the throne of his mercy, and where he has already associated the saints with himself in that judgement which they will pronounce upon the world on the day of the *parousia.* Until then the judgement is one of mercy only, and the saints exercise it freely, interceding for ever) kind of grace in favour of those who invoke them.

As this feast may occur during the period after Septuagesima, when the alleluiatic verse is not sung, the Missal orders in this case the Tract (Psalm cxxv) which replaces it to be sung *in directum.* " They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves."

The Gospel (Matt, xxiv, 3-13) is common to other feasts of martyrs. In this passage arc contained in one prophetic vision not only the signs which will announce the consummation of the world, but also those preceding the fall of Jerusalem, which was the type of blood-stained and impenitent

humanity. As the destruction of the Jewish capital was preceded by the deicide, so the final conflagration of the world will be the climax of a long series of persecutions and slaughterings of martyrs, whom the world will sacrifice to its own hatred of God and his Christ.

The Offertory from Psalm cxxiii, with its Gregorian melody, is one of the most inspired masterpieces of the Antiphonary of St Gregory. When made use of by the Church it is found to be more particularly suited to such of the martyrs as shed their blood in the flower of their youth, as was the case with Audifax and Abachum.

" Our soul hath been delivered, as a sparrow out of the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken, and we are delivered." The snare which Satan spread for us is hidden, as in a flowery meadow, amongst the joys of this life and in the ease consequent on this world's possessions. Vanity and emptiness clothe themselves in rainbow hues which seem to be real and we are deceived thereby ; but for his martyrs God severs this snare, and the little bird regains its freedom and flies up to heaven.

The Secret is of a general trend : " Regard, O Lord, the prayers and offerings of thy faithful, that they may both be pleasing to thee on the festival of thy saints and bestow upon us the aids of thy mercy." Mention is also here made of the oblations of the faithful because, in ancient times, the people were not merely silent spectators of the *Actio Sacra,* but, so that they might take an active part therein, themselves presented to the priest the bread and wine which was to serve for the Sacrifice.

The Antiphon for the Communion is taken, contrary to the usual rule—but this is a Mass of late composition—from the Gospel of St Luke (xii, 4) : " And I say to you, my friends : Be not afraid of them that persecute you."

Here Jesus uses three inducements to encourage us to suffer. First he appeals to our love, by calling us his friends; next he promises us a share in his sufferings, since the world will do to us what it did to him ; and lastly, he bids us not to be afraid, and in order to root this fear out of our hearts the more effectively, he puts before us the terrible punishment which God reserves hereafter for apostates, and exhorts us to fear the divine justice rather than the anger of man.

After the Communion this beautiful prayer is said : " Be appeased by the intercession of thy saints, and grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that what we now celebrate in time, we may receive in eternal salvation."

The desire expressed in to-day's Post-Communion prayer is truly sublime. What, indeed, does the Eucharist mean to us, celebrated as it is under the veils of the Sacrament, with

the *azymes* of the flight, amid the sorrows and the struggles of this present life, if not our part in the sacrifice and passion of Jesus? But the grace of the Sacrament places a seal upon our intimate union with our Redeemer, whereby that same Spirit which now consecrates us as fellow victims with Jesus, will one day raise up our decayed bodies by his own divine life, and give to them a share in the glory of the resurrection.

JANUARY 19

St Canute, King and Martyr*

St Canute IV, King- of Denmark, slain July 10, 1086, has been confused with another saint of the same name : Canute Laward, Duke of Sleswig, who also was put to death by the authorities on January 7, 1137. The feast of this holy king was included at a very late period, under Clement X (1670-76) in the number of the saints of the Roman Missal ; such inclusion seemingly signifying the contribution by distant Denmark of a representative to this supreme expression of the holiness and catholicity of the Roman Faith. An altar in the church of St Mary in Trastevere is dedicated to this saintly king of the Danes, and it was recently adorned by Benedict XV with artistic candelabra.

The Mass, with the exception of the Collect, is from the Common of a Martyr only.

The Introit is from Psalm xx : " In thy strength, O Lord, the just man shall joy; and in thy salvation he shall rejoice exceedingly : thou hast given him his heart's desire."

The Collect, which is modern, and therefore apart from the *cursus,* is specially historical in form, since it relates that the saint expired with his arms outstretched before the altar whilst praying for his murderers, and that after his death he worked numerous miracles. The fruit for which we ask from his intercession is that we also, by following his example, may imitate the passion of our Lord.

The Lesson is drawn from the Book of Wisdom (x, 10-14), in which the inspired author shows that it was Wisdom which brought the exile Jacob into safety, and when he was fleeing from the jealous anger of his brother, showed him the kingdom of God and the ladder ascending to it. Wisdom likewise went down into the prison where Joseph lay in bonds under a false accusation, and raised him up to stand beside the throne of Pharaoh the Egyptian. The Word of God accomplished all these wonders, in order to prepare

from the very beginning that fulness of time which he was afterwards to sanctify by his coming into the world. It was this mighty power of God that also kept hope alive in the hearts of the martyrs, for, when they were assailed by calumny, bound with chains, and dragged like malefactors to the place of public execution, they joyfully defied all these torments, knowing well that God would avenge their innocence now so utterly crushed.

The Gradual is derived from Psalm cxi : " Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord : he shall delight exceedingly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the righteous shall be blessed." Blessed, indeed, is he who, more than the torments and threatenings of men, fears only God, and finds his pleasure in meditation on his holy law. The Lord will bless him ; his example shall not be in vain, but shall bring forth abundant fruit for the building up of the whole Church, and blessings shall be upon his spiritual heritage.

The alleluiatic verse is from Psalm xx : " Thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones "—upon the head of him, O Lord, who was condemned to death and cursed by the impious hast thou set the crown of immortality, that crown which is thyself, and which thou givest to thy martyrs.

The Gospel is the same as for the feast of St Eusebius on December 16.

The Offertory is taken from Psalm viii : " Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour; and hast set him over the works of thy hands, O Lord." This right of the first-born over creation belongs to Christ alone ; but in a certain sense it is attributed also to the martyrs on account of the intimate union which the shedding of their blood has established between them and the Victim of Calvary. The martyrs thus represent the firstfruits, as it were, of the Church, those who according to the Apocalypse already " reign with Christ a thousand years."

The Secret is of usual form : " Receive our offerings and prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee, cleanse us by thy heavenly mysteries, and graciously hear us."

The verse for the Communion comes, though irregularly, from St Matthew (xvi, 24) : He who would follow Jesus must deny himself and take up the cross of the will of God, and walk in the footsteps of the Saviour to Calvary.

The following are the words of the Post-Communion : " We who are refreshed by thy holy gift, beseech thee, O Lord our God, that by the intercession of blessed Canute, thy martyr, we may enjoy the fruit of that worship which we pay thereto."

Virtue appears the more admirable when we find it in those

whom the world calls great, and that is so, because on account of their power, the example set by them has more influence on those around them. It seems as though their nobility of rank were reflected in their holy life, bringing out the full heroic strength of a soul capable of eclipsing the lustre of rank and worldly glory, by the splendour of Christian virtue.

JANUARY 20

SS Fabian, Pope and Sebastian, Martyrs

Station at the Cemetery of Callixtus and at that "ad Catacumbas."

When the rule of celebrating two or more feasts on the same day still obtained at Rome, two Masses with two separate stations were celebrated on this day, the one at the cemetery of Callixtus, at the tomb of Pope Fabian, and the other at the neighbouring cemetery *ad Catacumbas,* at the tomb of Sebastian. Such is the rule as indicated in the Philocalian *Feriale: XIII kal. Febr. Fabiani in Cdllisti et Sebastiani in catacumbas.* The ancient Sacramentaries retain both these two distinct celebrations, but give precedence to St Sebastian over Pope Fabian on account of the popularity of his *cultus.*

The early writers, indeed, agree in attributing to the intercession of the soldier saint, defender of the Church, a great number of miracles which brought him fame as a wonder-worker; and for this reason, both in to-day's Gospel Lesson and in the Antiphon for the Communion, there are applied to him the words of St Luke relating how a great multitude of sick persons pressed around our Saviour, for virtue went out from him and healed all.

The actual Mass described in the Sacramentary is, with a few modifications, the original stational Mass of St Sebastian, —indeed, many codices omit St Fabian altogether—and the earliest Roman Lectionary, that of the seventh century, described in a codex of Würzburg, prescribes for to-day, besides the Epistle, also the Old Testament Lesson from the Prophets, as was customary at Rome on the chief festivals of the year.

It is unnecessary to add that the Mass of St Sebastian, like all the others, always had its special Preface in the Sacramentaries. The suppression of all the ancient Prefaces proper to each Sunday and each festival of the year, which were of much beauty and so truly characteristic of Roman Liturgy, has greatly impoverished our Missal, and has been a serious loss to ecclesiastical devotion. Would it not be

possible that in a future revision of the Missal, *juxta codicum finem,* like that which Pius X secured for the Gregorian Antiphonary, the ancient Prefaces of the Gregorian Sacramentary may also be restored to their original places?

The Introit is taken from Psalm lxxviii, which is proper to martyrs: " Let the sighing of the prisoners come in before thee, O Lord ; render to our neighbours sevenfold in their bosom ; revenge the blood of thy saints which hath been shed." God will do justice at the end of the world; in the meantime his chastisements are so many proofs of his love, for in punishing the sinner he always aims at his correction in order that he may be converted and live.

Originally both the Masses, that of St Sebastian as well as that of St Fabian, had their own Collects; but when the two stations were merged into one, the name of Sebastian was merely added in the Collect for bishops and martyrs, after that of St Fabian.

In to-day's Missal, therefore, the Collect runs thus: " Look upon our weakness, O God almighty; and since the weight of our own deeds is grievous to us, may the glorious intercession of thy blessed martyrs Fabian and Sebastian protect us. Through our Lord."

In the Gregorian Sacramentary we have this other Collect for the station *ad catacumbas: Deus qui beatum Sebastianum Martyrem tuum virtute constantiae in passione roborasti; ex ejus nobis imitatione tribue, pro amore tuo prospera mundi despicere, et nulla ejus adversa formidare.*

The Lesson from St Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews (xi, 33 *sqq),* already allotted in the Würzburg Lectionary to the Mass of St Sebastian, vividly describes all the sufferings endured by the just in the Old Testament on account of their faith. It is not the mere fact of suffering which renders us acceptable to God, but as the apostle teaches us it is the confession of the Faith by means of good works and sufferings which wins for us the crown : *Hi omnes testimonio fidei probati inventi sunt.* Hence the Church sings in the Office of Terce :

Os, lingua, mens, sensus vigor
Confessionem fersonent,

so that we may confess the name of Jesus our Saviour every moment of our life, and press on without delay along the way of salvation.

In the *Comes* of Wurzburg the second Lesson from the Old Testament appointed for to-day's synaxis *ad catacumbas* is taken from the Book of Wisdom (x, 17-20), in which is celebrated the victory of the Israelites over the Egyptians,

when Jehovah was the avenger of his people and their guide in the desert.

The Gradual comes from the famous Canticle of Moses in Exodus (xv, 6, n) after the passage of the Red Sea, and was originally in keeping with the preceding excerpt from the Book of Wisdom : " God is glorious in his saints, wonderful in majesty, doing wonders. Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorified in strength : thy right hand hath broken the enemies." The Red Sea in which Satan has been overthrown is a type of the martyrdom by which the heroic athletes of Christ have triumphed over their persecutors. The persecutors have driven them to the rack and to the stake in order to wrest from them their faith, but instead the invincible soul of the martyr has reached the shores of eternity in safety, and his executioners have been overwhelmed in the shame of defeat.

The alleluiatic verse is derived from Psalm cxliv, and tells of the praises which the saints in heaven sing before the throne of God and the Lamb : " Thy saints shall bless thee, O Lord; they shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom."

After Septuagesima instead of the alleluiatic verse the Tract is recited as on the preceding day.

The Gospel (Luke vi, 17-23), which relates how virtue went out from the Lord for the healing of the sick, is very appropriate to the feast of St Sebastian, who was venerated by the early Christians as a special protector against epidemics. There may still be seen in the Basilica of St Peter *in Vincoli* on the Esquiline the altar with the representation in mosaic of the illustrious martyr erected by Pope Agatho as a votive offering that Rome might be freed by the intercession of the saint from the plague which was ravaging it at that time.

This popular devotion to St Sebastian was general all over Italy, but especially in Rome, where at least nine ancient churches existed in his honour. Besides the Basilica *ad Catacumbas* there was one at the Lateran Palace, built by Pope Theodore. Another rose up on the Palatine, where in the adjoining race-course St Sebastian had suffered martyrdom. One was erected beside the Tiber in the *Rione Arenula;* a fourth and a fifth were in the Borgo near St Peter's ; and lastly, a sixth church stood on the Via Papalis, where, according to tradition, the body of St Sebastian was thrown into a drain.

In the Middle Ages the sacred head of St Sebastian was transferred by Pope Gregory IV to the Cælian Hill, and placed in the Basilica of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs; and almost at the same time a large portion of his relics were conveyed to the Abbey of St Médard at Soissons. On this occasion a tiny phial containing a few drops of his blood

remained in the Imperial Abbey of Farfa in Sabina, where the precious remains of the martyr received kindly hospitality on the first night after the departure of the band of monks of Soissons from the Eternal City.

The Offertory is drawn from Psalm xxxi : " Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye just; and glory all ye right of heart." The motive of this holy joy is the glory which God derives from the victories of his elect. Wherefore the Prophet says : "Let him that glorieth, glory in this: that he understandeth and knoweth me" : *In hoc glorietur qui gloriatur, scire et nosse me.*[1]

The Secret is as follows : " Graciously receive, O Lord, the offerings which are offered up to thee by the merits of thy blessed martyrs, Fabian and Sebastian, and grant that they may prove a help to us for evermore. Through our Lord." This unfailing help is grace, that is the " gift " of God which of its own nature is not subject to withdrawal or variation. On the contrary, in God's wondrous plan it is intended to increase in the soul continually—that is, to give itself more and more to man, in order gradually to render him capable of the beatific possession of God in heaven.

In the Gregorian Sacramentary, we have to-day the proper Preface for the stational Mass of St Sebastian : . . . *aeterne Deus; quoniam martyris beati Sebastiani pro confessione nominis tui venerabilis sanguis effusus, simul et tua mirabilia manifestat, quo perficis in infirmitate virtutem, et nostris studiis dat profectum, et infirmis apud Te praestat auxilium, per Christum.*

The Communion (Luke vi, 17-19) again extols the extraordinary fame which St Sebastian already enjoyed in olden days as a worker of miracles. " A multitude of sick, and they that were troubled with unclean spirits came to him ; for virtue went out from him, and healed all." Oh, if Catholics only knew the inestimable riches of their religion ! God has endued the least acts of our worship with treasures of grace and merit, yet we suffer from a number of spiritual miseries and physical ills, simply because we have not sufficient faith to make use of the remedies which he in his goodness offers to us.

The health-giving virtue of our Saviour did not cease with his Ascension into heaven. We still come near to Jesus in the Sacraments, in holy inspirations, in sermons, in the worries of daily life, and in all these circumstances, if we approach him with faith, there emanates from him a virtue which has power to heal all our infirmities.

After the Communion is said the prayer : " Being refreshed by the holy gifts of which we have partaken, we beseech

[1] Jeremias ix, 24.

thee, O Lord our God, that by the intercession of thy holy martyrs, Fabian and Sebastian, we may enjoy the fruits of what we celebrate. Through our Lord."

Multitudo languentium, such is this world of ours, seen through the eyes of faith. A multitude of sick persons, all the more worthy of compassion in that there are so few amongst them who, like those sick of whom to-day's Gospel speaks, go to Christ, the heavenly physician, to be healed.

A marble fragment of a *transenna* with this inscription dating from the fifth century forms part of the original tomb of St Sebastian which has lately been discovered on the Appian Way: *apud vestigia Apostolorum.*

TEMPORIBVS · SANCTI
INNOCENTI · EPISCOPI
PROCLINVS · ET · VRSVS · PRAESBB
TITVLI · BVZANTI
SANCTO · MARTYRI
SEBASTIAN© · EX · VOTO · FECERVNT

This monument is now in the Lateran Museum.

JANUARY 21

St Agnes, Virgin and Martyr

Station at the " Coemeterium minus," or " Agellum " of St Agnes.

In ancient times the station was held in the Basilica of St Agnes on the Via Nomentana, where on the occasion of this feast St Gregory preached one of his forty celebrated homilies on the Gospel. The Fathers of the Latin Church, Jerome, Ambrose, Damasus, and Prudentius all join in singing the praises of this virginal ** Lamb " who fearlessly faced the sword and the stake of idolatrous Rome, and generously shed her blood for him who had consecrated her with his own. *Omnium gentium litteris atque Unguis, praecipue in Ecclesiis, Agnetis vita laudata est.*[1] Her body was laid originally in a small property on the Via Nomentana, *in agello suo,* not far from the *coemeterium majus,* where, according to ancient Roman tradition, St Peter had baptized.

When peace had been granted to the Church, Constantia, daughter to Constantina, the sister of the Emperor Constantine, caused a magnificent basilica to be built at that tomb, and near it some of the members of the Imperial family were

[1] Hieron., *Eftsl.* CXX, *ad Demetriadem, P.L.* XXII, col. 1123.

interred. It is very probable that a convent of nuns was then founded, which would thus be the most ancient in the city. The acrostic inscription on this first building of the time of Constantine still remains.

C ONSTANTINA · DEVM · VENERANS · CHRISTOQVE DICATA
O MNIBVS · IMPENSIS · DEVOTA · MENTE · PARATIS
N VMINE · DIVINO · MVLTVM · CHRISTO · QVE · IVVANTE
S ACRAVIT · TEMPLVM · VICTRICIS · VIRGINIS · AGNES
T EMPLORVM · QVOD · VICIT · OPVS · TERRENAQVE · CVNCTA
A VREA · QVAE · RVTILANT · SVMMI · FASTIGIA · TECTI
N OMEN · ENIM · CHRISTI · CELEBRATVR · SEDIBVS · ISTIS
T ARTAREAM · SOLVS · POTVIT · QVI · VINCERE · MORTEM
I NVECTVS · CAELO · SOLVS · QVE · INFERRE ⁞ TRIVMPHVM
N OMEN · ADAE · REFERENS · ET · CORPVS · ET · OMNIA · MEMBRA
A MORTIS · TENEBRIS · ET · CAEC,\ · NOCTE · LEVATA
D IGNVM · IGITVR · MVNVS · MARTYR · DEVOTA · QVE · CHRISTO
E X · OPIBVS · NOSTRIS · PER · SAECVLA · LONGA · TENEBRIS
O FELIX ⁞ VIRGO · MEMORANDI · NOMINIS · AGNES

" Constantina vowed to God and consecrated to Christ, having by the grace of God and with the help of Christ collected the necessary funds, dedicated with pious intention this church to the victorious virgin Agnes. The edifice surpasses the splendour of all other churches and of all secular buildings whose lofty summits shine with the light reflected from their gilded roof-tiles. In this church the name of Christ is invoked, the name of him who alone was able to conquer death and hell, and who in the name of the whole race of Adam having won back his body and its members from the claims of the shadow of death and of the dread night of the grave, brought them triumphantly into heaven. Thou, therefore, shalt possess for many long years a memorial which our offerings have erected, O martyr consecrated to Christ, O blessed Virgin Agnes, whose name is remembered by all."

The acrostic formed by the first letters of these involved and inelegant lines, composed in a decadent age of literature, is *Constantina Deo.*

The basilica, although it has been restored several times, still preserves sufficiently the primitive architectural type of the times of Symmachus and Honorius I.

Like the titular church of the Four Holy Crowned Martyrs on the Cælian Hill, it has two ambulatories, one above the other, over the aisles, the upper one of which, or *matroneum,* was originally intended for ladies of the aristocracy and consecrated virgins. The basilica is some distance below the level of the road and on that of the cemetery, for during the reign of Constantine, in order not to remove'the martyr from

her primitive place of burial, the floor of the church was dug out again, destroying the adjacent galleries of the catacombs, just as was done in similar instances at San Lorenzo and in the Basilica of SS Nereus and Achilleus on the Via Ardeatina.

Besides the sepulchral basilica on the Via Nomentana there were many other ancient churches in Rome in the early Middle Ages dedicated to St Agnes. Of these we need mention only the most celebrated, that one *in Agone,* built on the ruins of the Stadium of Alexander Severus, where the martyr was probably exposed in the *lupanar;* the church near the Pantheon, and another *ad duo furna* close to St Praxedes.

The Mass in honour of St Agnes was the prototype of that which afterwards became the Common of all Virgins. It is very ancient and is solemn and sober in character, in contrast to the Office, which is of a later date and is founded on apocryphal writings. With this liturgical praise we may appropriately compare the splendid inscription of Pope Damasus in honour of St Agnes, which carved in its original marble still adorns the great stairway leading down from the Via Nomentana to the basilica of the martyr.

FAMA · REFERT · SANCTOS · DVDVM · RETVLISSE · PARENTES
AGNEN · CVM · LVGVBRES · CANTVS · TVBA · CONCREPVISSET
NVTRICIS · GREMIVM · SVBITO · RELIQVISSE · PVELLAM
SPONTE · TRVCIS · CALCASSE · MINAS · RABIEM · QVE · TYRANNI
VRERE · CVM · FLAMMIS · VOLVISSET · NOBILE · CORPVS
VIRIBVS · IMMENSVM · PARVIS · SVPERASSE · TIMOREM
NVDA · QVE · PROFVSVM · CRINEM · PER · MEMBRA · DEDISSE
NE · DOMINI · TEMPLVM · FACIES · PERITVRA · VIDERET
O · VENERANDA · MIHI · SANCTVM · DECVS · ALMA · PVDORIS
VT · DAMASI · PRECIBVS · FAVEAS · PRECOR · INCLITA · MARTYR

" History relates that the pious parents of Agnes described how she, when still a child, as soon as the trumpet of the herald announced the lamentable edict of persecution, suddenly sprang from the arms of her nurse to face fearlessly the rage of the cruel tyrant and to despise his threats. When he would have given her frail body to the flames, Agnes succeeded with her feeble childish strength in overcoming the horror and fear of that terrible punishment. Stripped of her garments, she covered her bosom with her hair as with a cloak, that no human eye might rest on that temple sacred to the Lord. O thou high-souled virgin, O shining light of Christian modesty, worthy object of all my veneration, I beseech thee, O illustrious martyr, receive favourably the prayers of Damasus."

The Introit is that of December 2, the feast of St Bibiana.

The Collect dwells upon the immensity of the glory of Christ who, in order to triumph over the torments and all the powers of hell, makes use of the weakest instruments, such as the virginity and holiness of a young and tender girl, so that all the praise of the victory may be paid to God alone. This is the source of the Church's strength, the argument which proves the divine nature of her origin and of her life; she alone can boast of so many and of such great heroes. " Almighty, everlasting God, who choosest the weak things of the world to confound the strong; mercifully grant that we, who keep the solemn feast of blessed Agnes, thy virgin and martyr, may enjoy her intercession with thee. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is derived from Ecclesiasticus, and is like that for the feast of St Barbara on December 4. From the *Conies* of Würzburg it is evident that this passage must in all probability have originally taken the place of the first Lesson from the Prophets, since a second followed from that Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians in which he describes the merits of virginity. The first Lesson, the only one now remaining, is admirably suitable to the feast of St Agnes, so much so that the *Acta of* the saint seem to be inspired by the sacred text read to-day at the stational Mass of her festival.

The Gradual is taken from Psalm xliv, *De virginitate,* and, applying to the bride that which is said of the fortitude of the bridegroom, it exalts not only the outward grace of the most valiant maiden, but also the inward beauty of her secret virtues, her faith, her resolution, her love of truth, all of which led her to arm herself for the combat and to ride forth to fight with Satan, and finally to ascend the pyre, rather than turn aside in the least degree from this supreme truth in which—to use a phrase of St John—she had ever walked.

Gradual : " Grace is poured abroad in thy lips : therefore hath God blessed thee for ever. Because of truth and meekness and justice : and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully."

The alleluiatic verse (Matt, xxv, 4-6) is proper to the feast of St Agnes : " The five wise virgins took oil in their vessels with the lamps ; but at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet Christ our Lord." St Augustine explains that the five prudent virgins arc all those Catholic souls who, keeping their senses free from forbidden things through Christian mortification, go forward to meet Christ the Judge by making steady progress along the path of virtue.

We should remember that those parts of the Mass which arc now read by the priest alone were originally sung by

trained soloists or by choirs of clerical singers. Thus with its lessons, hymns, chants, ceremonies, sacred ministers, etc., the Mass was not merely a prayer but a sacred action—we might almost say, a liturgical drama—which caused a profound impression especially on the popular classes. As music, then, occupies a very important place in the Roman Liturgy, it is impossible to adjudge fairly the beauty of the artistic inspiration of a responsory or of an antiphon merely by its words, for it is necessary also to hear the melody with which it is clothed.

To-day's alleluiatic verse, which is one of the most delicate and full of feeling amongst those in the Gregorian collection, affords an example of this. It appears also to have inspired the Ravennese artist who at the time of the Gothic domination represented in mosaic in the Basilica of St Apollinare Nuovo on one of the walls of the nave, a long succession of virgins, among whom is St Agnes, moving each with a crown in her hand towards the Mother of the Saviour.

After Septuagesima, the preceding alleluiatic verse being then omitted, the Tract (Psalm xliv) is read, which, contrary to the classical tradition, has an initial verse that does not emanate from the Psalter: "Come, O spouse of Christ, receive the crown which the Lord hath prepared for thee for ever: for love of whom thou didst shed thy blood." Psalm xliv: "Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The martyr has espoused herself to Christ on the bridal bed of the cross, and the heavenly Bridegroom has willed to be himself the crown of his bride.

This thought inspired the well-known epigraph of Pope Honorius I which the early syllogists inscribed upon the tomb of St Agnes :

INCLITA ⧫ VOTA · SVIS · ADQVIRVNT · PRAEMIA · LAVDIS
DVM · PERFECTA · MICANT · MENTE · FIDE · MERITIS
VIRGINIS · HOC · AGNAE · CLAVDVNTVR · MEMBRA · SEPVLCHRO
QVAE · INCORRVPTA · TAMEN · VITA · SEPVLTA · TENET
HOC · OPVS · ARGENTO · CONSTRVX1T · HONORIVS · AMPLO
MARTYRIS · ET · SANCTAE · VIRGINIS · 013 · MERITVM

The Gospel (Matt, xxv, 1-13), with the parable of the virgins who, with lighted lamps in their hands go forth to meet the Bridegroom, was commentated on by St Gregory the Great in the Basilica of St Agnes on the day of her *natalis*. As time went on both the passage from the Gospel and the homily of St Gregory became a part of the Common of a Virgin Martyr.

The Bridegroom and the Bride are Christ and the Church. The ten virgins are the faithful, who by the practice of

Christian mortification abstain from the forbidden pleasures of the world, in order to be ready to meet the Lord when he comes to judge the world. The oil in the lamps represents the burning charity and the good works which are the fruits of the Catholic Faith, quae *per dilectionem operatur;* the unexpected arrival of the Bridegroom and the closing of the door of the banqueting-hall are figures of the hour of death, which, as the closing words of to-day's Gospel tell us, comes together with Christ at an hour that we know not.

This passage from the New Testament is applicable, as we have said, to the souls of all the faithful, but is especially appropriate to the holy virgins, because, taking into consideration the flight of time and the shortness of life, they have anticipated here in the Church Militant by the holy purpose of their spotless chastity that privileged state which will become general in the Church Triumphant, in which even mortals *erunt sicut angeli Dei in coelo.*

The Offertory comes from the usual Psalm xliv, *De virginitate,* which is well suited to that moment in the Liturgy for which it is intended—that is, when, following the divine Bridegroom who offers himself to the King in the sacrifice of the altar, there appears also the Virgin Church, surrounded by the white-robed company of her saints to join her own offering with that of the Redeemer. " After her shall virgins be brought to the King ; her neighbours shall be brought to thee with gladness and rejoicing ; they shall be brought into the temple to the King our Lord."

The following is the Secret : " Mercifully receive, O Lord, the sacrifices which we offer to thee ; and by the intercession of blessed Agnes thy virgin and martyr, loose the bonds of our sins. Through our Lord."

The Gregorian Sacramentary has one of its splendid Prefaces for to-day: . . .*aeterne Deus; et diem beatae Agnetis martyrio consecratam solemniter recensere; quae terrenae generositatis oblectamenta despiciens, caelestem meruit dignitatem ; societatis humanae vota contemnens, aeterni Regis est sociata consortio; et pretiosam mortem, sexus fragilitate calcata, pro Christi confessione suscipiens, simul est facta conformis et sempiternitatis ejus et gloriae. Per quem majestatem tuam,* etc.

In these classical Prefaces, besides the elegance of the ancient *cursus,* one realizes all the importance and renown which formerly were attached to these festival stations of the martyrs.

The Antiphon for the Communion is identical with the alleluiatic verse. In the first ages of the Church, when popular belief still looked for the imminent *parousia* of the divine Judge, how deep an impression must the words of the Gospel

so often repeated in to-day's Liturgy have made, uttered as they were in the dead of night, in the very cemetery itself beside the martyr's tomb : " Behold the Bridegroom cometh." This is the supreme desire of all the elect, and the final aspiration of the holy Scriptures which close with the words of the seer of Patmos: *Amen, veni, Domine Jesu.*

The Post-Communion was originally proper to the feast of St Agnes, but later it formed part of the Common of Confessors : " We who have been refreshed with heavenly meat and drink, humbly beseech thee, our God, that we may be defended by the prayers of her in memory of whom we have received these mysteries. Through our Lord." The holy Eucharist celebrated in memory of the martyrs, expresses our union with them, not only in their Faith, for which they indeed suffered the death of the body, but also in their charity which made them one with Christ, the victim of propitiation for the sins of the world. In a word the Mass and the Communion offered on the *natalis* of a martyr are for us, as it were, a kind of martyrdom by desire.

The Roman Church also celebrates the feast of this most saintly *Agna* with another very touching ceremony. The Lateran Chapter on this day presents to the Pope as a kind of tribute two little lambs from whose wool the *pallia* of the Archbishops are woven. But before being given to the Pope, the two innocent little creatures are taken to the altar of St Agnes, where, after the stational Mass, they receive a special blessing. In the Middle Ages this presentation was carried out with great solemnity, for the Canons of the Lateran, with a cross borne before them, went in procession in front of the horse, which, covered with a golden caparison, carried on cushions the two lambs.

After the lambs, as symbols of innocence, have been presented to the holy Father, they are entrusted to the care of the Benedictine nuns of the Convent of St Cecilia in Trastevere, so as in this way to associate both the celebrated Roman martyrs in this rite so expressive of virginal purity.

We will conclude with the lines composed by Prudentius in his magnificent hymn to St Agnes.[1]

O Virgo felix, O nova gloria,	O fortunate Virgin, O new glory,
Caelestis arcis nobilis incola,	Illustrious citizen of the heavenly realm,
Intende nostris colluvionibus	Turn thy face towards our polluted souls,
Vultum, gemello cum diademate,	Thou whose brow is encircled with a twofold crown.
Cui posse soli Cunctiparens dedit	To thee alone the great Creator granted

[1] *Ptristephanon, Hymn. XIV, P.L.* LX, col. 5S9.

Castum ve! ipsum reddere fornicem.
Purgabor oris propitiabilis

Fulgore, nostrum si jecur impleas :
Nil non pudicum est, quod pia visere
Dignaris, almo vel pede tangere.

That thy presence should make pure a den of sin.
I too shall be cleansed if thou wilt fill my heart
With the light of thy compassionate words.
Nothing can remain unclean upon which thou dost deign to look,
O merciful one, or at least to touch with thy virgin foot.

JANUARY *22*

SS Vincent and Anastasius, Martyrs

*Station at the Vatican at the Oratory " in Hierusalem/ and at the Monastery " ad Aquas Salvias ** on the Via Ostiensis.*

These two martyrs also had each the honour of a separate stational Mass at Rome. The feast of the Deacon Vincent is the more ancient, and was celebrated in his oratory close to St Peter's; that of the monk Anastasius dates only from the Pontificate of Honorius I (625-638), when the head of the saint was transferred from the East to the monastery *ad Aquas Salvias* near the Via Ostiensis, so his stational Mass was celebrated at the same spot.

Some liturgists have supposed that on this day the station of St Vincent was celebrated also at the title of Eusebius on the Esquiline, but they are not agreed in determining the motive which suggested the choice of this basilica. We only know that the body of one of the deacons *comites Xysti,* called Vincent, reposed there, and that he was originally buried beside St Eusebius in the papal crypt of the cemetery of Callixtus ; also that in consequence the Esquiline basilica was also dedicated to this Vincent, a Roman deacon and martyr.

There were many other churches in Rome dedicated to St Vincent. The most ancient was that which was built in the Vatican, probably by Pope Symmachus, and which stood beside the oratory of the Holy Cross *in Hierusalem.* The monastery adjoining it is mentioned in the life of Stephen III. In the lists of Roman churches we also find the oratory of St Vincent *de Papa,* near the houses of the Papareschi in the Trastevere, the church of SS Vincent and Anastasius *de Trivio,* and that of SS Vincent, Anastasius, and Bartholomew *de Colupna.* Outside Rome itself, throughout the whole of Latin Europe, one may say, there are scattered numberless churches dedicated to this glorious martyr whose name is

associated in the Litany of the Saints with those of the deacons Stephen and Lawrence. Among the most renowned monasteries named after St Vincent we may recall that one *ad fontes Vulturni* founded at the beginning of the eighth century by St Thomas of Maurienne, abbot of Farfa.

Prudentius tells in verse of the martyrdom of St Vincent in his *Peristephanon*.[1]

The ancient Roman Sacramentaries and Lectionaries give as the stational Mass of St Vincent that one in the Missal beginning with the words: *Laetabitur justus,* which is now in the Common of Martyrs, and which was given above on the fourteenth of this month. The first and last Collects are the same as those actually used, only they did not originally mention St Anastasius by name.

The Gospel Lesson (John xii, 24-26) is that for the feasts of deacons, in which Christ likens himself to a grain of wheat which must first fall into the ground and die before it can bring forth fruit. This is true also of anyone who would serve God.

The Secret is no longer in use, nor the splendid Preface. The former was originally as follows: *Hodiernum, Domine, sacrificium laetantes offerimus, quo beati Vincentii caelestem victoriam recensentes, et tua magnalia praedicamus, et nos acquisisse gaudemus suffragia gloriosa.* To-day the Church, celebrating the victory of the heroic deacon, offers the divine Sacrifice with exultation in order to thank the Lord God for having endowed his martyr with so much strength and given such a powerful intercessor to his people.

The chant proper to the martyr inserted in the Preface is the following: *Per Christum Dominum nostrum; pro cujus nomine gloriosus levita Vincentius et miles invictus rabidi hostis insaniam interritus adiit, modestus sustinuit, securus irrisit, sciens paratus esse ut resisteret, nesciens elatus esse ut vinceret; in utroque Domini ac Magistri sui vestigia sequens, qui humilitatis custodiendae et de hostibus triumphandi, suis sequenda exempla monstravit. Per quern,* etc.

The *cultus* of St Anastasius, a Persian monk, martyred about 626 at Cæsarea in Palestine under Chosroes, began in Rome some time later when his head was brought thither and placed in the monastery *ad Aquas Salvias* which had been built by Narses for monks from Cilicia. In a little while the great number of cures which were effected by St Anastasius gained for him such renown as a worker of miracles that the Würzburg List of Gospels assigns for his Mass the passage from St Mark (v, 21-43), which relates how Jesus raised the little daughter of Jairus, and healed the woman suffering for twelve years from an issue of blood.

[1] *Hymn.* K, *P.L.* LX, col. 378 *$qq.*

The numerous churches dedicated to St Anastasius in Rome prove how popular this devotion became; amongst them are those in the Arenula, at the Marmorata, in the Rione *de pinea,* and at Trevi. The miracles which were wrought in the early Middle Ages by means of the representation of the saint caused it to be reproduced down to quite recent times, as an illustration in the reading-books of the primary schools.

There is now no longer a separate Mass of St Vincent and of St Anastasius as formerly, but it is that of the Common of Martyrs with two special commemorative Collects.

The Introit is that of January *20.*

The Collect is thus worded: "Give ear, O Lord, to our supplications and grant that we who acknowledge the guilt of our sins may be set free by the pleading of thy blessed martyrs, Vincent and Anastasius. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is from the Book of Wisdom (iii, 1-8): The souls of the just are in the hand of God, he protects them and saves them even though he may permit the wicked to try them for a while with torments. The persecutors, far from altering in any way the divine counsels, form part of God's plan for the predestination of the elect, since the trial to which they subject the saints is, as it were, the flame of a crucible in which gold is tested and purified.

The Gradual is the same as on the feast of the martyrs Fabian and Sebastian.

The alleluiatic verse is taken from Ecclesiasticus (xliv, 14): "The bodies of the saints are buried in peace; and their names live unto generation and generation."

After Septuagesima the Tract is sung in place of the preceding verse, as on January 20.

The Gospel is drawn from St Luke (xxi, 9-19), in which Christ prophesies the earthquakes, the signs in the heavens, and the severe persecutions of the saints which shall precede the end of the world. There are, however, two things which are for the encouragement of the martyrs in bearing these torments in an heroic spirit. The first is that they suffer and are hated because of Christ; the second that their tormentors, to whom God sometimes abandons the bodies of the faithful, are not only powerless to injure their souls, but, on the contrary, are the occasion of their obtaining undying happiness and glory.

The verse for the Offertory is derived from Psalm lxvii, yet it does not refer literally to the saints, but, as the Latin version would seem to show, to God's sanctuary, the temple at Jerusalem: "God is wonderful in his saints: the God of Israel

is he who will give power and strength to his people : blessed be God."

It was hence that the martyrs obtained such great courage. St Felicitas of Carthage, in the pangs of child-birth, exclaimed: " Now it is I who suffer that which I suffer; but when I shall be exposed to the beasts in the arena, it will be another who will suffer for me, since it is for him that I shall then suffer."

In the Secret we say : " We offer up to thee, O Lord, these gifts for our sacrifice; for the sake of thy righteous ones may they be well-pleasing to thee ; and out of thy compassion may they become healthful for us. Through our Lord."

The Communion is from the Lesson (Wisdom iii, 4-6) previously read : " And though in the sight of men they suffered torments, God hath tried them : as gold in the furnace he hath proved them, and as holocausts he hath received them." This is the motive which must lead us greatly to esteem persecution and those who persecute us. Wicked men may torment the martyrs, but the Scriptures teach us that it is God who subjects them to this trial.

The Post-Communion is in these words: "We beseech thee, O God almighty, that we who have received food from heaven, may through the intercession of thy blessed martyrs Vincent and Anastasius be defended by it from all harm. Through our Lord."

The example of the heroic fortitude of the martyrs who in the hope of the resurrection, rather than betray the Faith, seek no escape from death, is, indeed, necessary in our days when a sentimental pietistic feeling threatens to replace in the conscience of many the practical profession of the Christian life.

JANUARY 23

St Emerentiana, Virgin and Martyr

Station at the " Coemeterium majus " on the Via Nomentana.

The feast of this foster-sister of St Agnes who, while still a catechumen, was put to death near the tomb of the famous virgin martyr, occurs in many codices of the Gregorian Sacramentary and in the Antiphonary of St Peter of the twelfth century, but, like very many other martyrs of the Salario-Nomentana group, is not to be found in the earlier calendars. Very ancient proofs exist, however, of the *cultus* of St Emerentiana ; indeed, her relics, which at first were buried in the *coemeterium majus* near the *agellum* of St Agnes, were afterwards transferred to a greater basilica, where they were

venerated by pilgrims in the eighth century. Later still, the bones of the martyr were placed together with those of her *collactanea,* and on October 7, 1605, Cardinal Sfondrati made the canonical identification of the relics and placed the two bodies in one and the same silver shrine.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Virgin and Martyr throughout as on December 2, with the exception of the Collect: "Let blessed Emerentiana, thy virgin and martyr, win for us pardon from thee, O Lord, we beseech thee; for both by her chastity and by her confession of thy power she ever pleased thee well."

An inscription discovered in the Trastevere which we have already quoted in another part of this work recalls the name of Emerentiana. It will be of interest to repeat it here :

xvi · kal · octob · MARTYRORv(m in coeme)
TERV · MAIORE · VICTORIS · FELI(cis)
EMERENTIANETIS · ET · ALEXAN(dri)

The Martyrology of St Jerome agrees in entering the feast of St Emerentiana for September 16, together with Papias, Maurus, Victor, Felix, and Alexander; the entire group, that is, of the martyrs buried in the *coemeterium majus* on the Via Nomentana.

The possibility, however, still remains, that January 23 is the real date of the death of Emerentiana, the more so as her *natalis* is found under that day in the Bernese *Laterculus: Romae, Emerentiani martyris.*

JANUARY 23

St Raymund of Pennafort, Confessor*

The feast of this eminent canonist, who died January 6, 1275, chaplain and penitentiary to Gregory IX, dates only from the time of Clement X. The Mass is that of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop ; but the Collect, composed by Pope Clement VIII, is proper to the feast. It alludes both to the office which the saint held in the Pontifical Curia, and to his marvellous voyage when, as some writers tell us, he went from the Balearic Islands to Barcelona, using his cloak, which he spread upon the waves of the sea, in place of a ship.

The Introit is the same as that of the feast of St Sabbas on December 5.

The Collect does not follow the rules of the *cursus,* but

it must be admitted that the author, intent, like the generality of modern composers, on introducing the historical facts of his hero's life, has succeeded in so doing with a certain degree of grace and ability. " O God, who didst choose blessed Raymund to be eminent as a minister of the sacrament of penance, and didst marvellously guide him through the waters of the sea; grant that through his intercession we may have strength to produce worthy fruits of penance and to reach the haven of eternal salvation."

The fruit which we must ask for today through the intercession of the holy Dominican, penitentiary of the austere Gregory IX, is that of contrition and true penitence. This is the only cloak which we can throw upon the waves of this world in order to reach in safety the harbour of a happy eternity.

The Lesson comes from Ecclesiasticus (xxxi, 8-11), although at Rome all the philosophical books are classed under the generic name of the " The Book of Wisdom." The passage read to-day praises the rich man who has not allowed his wealth to be a hindrance to him, as it is indeed to many; but has made use of it in order to do good. He for his part has amassed true riches, not in his coffers, but in the sight of God.

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are like those for the feast of St Francis Xavier, on December 3. After Septuagesima the Tract is that given above for the Mass of St Paul the Hermit, on January 15.

The Gospel is similar to that read on the feast of St Anthony on the seventeenth of the same month.

The Offertory is that assigned to December 3.

The Secret is thus expressed: " In memory of thy saints, O Lord, we offer to thee a sacrifice of praise: by its means we hope to be delivered both from present and from future evils." This prayer has a distinctly classical tone. Our present trials are the consequences, or as St Paul would say, the *stipendia peccati;* the future evils which threaten us are not merely temporal misfortunes, but especially temptations and relapses into sin.

The Communion is like that appointed for December 3.

The Post-Communion is that of St Agnes on January 21.

The name of St Raymund is indissolubly linked with the five books of the Decretals, which he compiled by order of Gregory IX. Let us beg from him a great zeal for ecclesiastical discipline, a steadfast love, and an unlimited devotion in all that concerns the service of the Church.

JANUARY 24

St Timothy, Bishop and Martyr*

The Roman Church, with good reason, has consecrated this day to the memory of Timothy, who, a prisoner of Cæsar together with the apostle Paul, was one of the first to preach the Gospel in the corrupt Rome under the reign of the parricide Nero. His *cultus* was very popular in the East, especially after the Emperor Constantius had caused his relics to be brought to Constantinople. In the West, although the Fathers of the Church frequently praised the holiness and zeal of Timothy, he never became a really popular figure, and we must turn to the time of Clement VIII to find his feast included in the Roman Breviary as a semi-double. More recently Pius IX, in 1854, raised it to the rank of a double.

In the Greek Calendars St Timothy, with the title of apostle, is commemorated on January 22 : *Ὑιμοθώυ* Ἀποσ-όλον. The Armenians celebrate the feast of the saint on the Thursday after the fifth Sunday following the festival of the Exaltation of the Cross ; and associate with him the other disciples of St Paul : Titus, Archippus, Philemon, Sosipater, Jason, and Onesimus, who are also mentioned in their calendars on the respective dates of their death.

The Mass is the Common of a Martyr and Bishop, which has already been described on January 16.

The Collect is identical with that for St Hyginus on January 11, but the Lesson is proper to the feast, being taken from the Epistle which Paul addressed from prison to Timothy himself (1 Tim. vi, 11-16), encouraging him to persevere in the fight for the Faith, so that he might preserve in its entirety the Gospel treasure entrusted to him.

" Dearly beloved : Follow after justice, godliness, faith, charity, patience, mildness. Fight the good fight of faith ; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast confessed a good confession before many witnesses. I charge thee before God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who gave testimony under Pontius Pilate, a good confession ; that thou keep the commandment without spot, blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall show who is the Blessed and only Mighty, the King of kings, and Lord of lords ; who alone hath immortality, and inhabiteth light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen nor can see; to whom be honour and empire everlasting. Amen."

The apostle here exhorts his disciple Timothy to keep intact the deposit of the Faith as he has received it, and enforces his

injunctions by various arguments, some subjective, and others of universal and objective value. First he reminds him that, having been called to the grace of the Faith, he was at the same time called to eternal glory; then he brings back to his memory a circumstance of his baptismal initiation—that is to say, the profession of faith which was repeated by the candidate in the presence of those there assembled.

But the Creed has not merely a subjective value; so the apostle passes on to the second part of his argument, invoking those very articles of faith: the Father who gives life to all things, and the Son who seals his Gospel by his death under Pontius Pilate, so as to commit Timothy still more to his duty as an Evangelist. Indeed, he who preaches the Gospel takes part in the work of God, calling to the life of grace the souls of sinners, and although the world and the devil may put many obstacles in the way in order to hinder the sowing of the divine seed, yet the apostle must be true to his mission. In this he follows the example of the Redeemer, who, for our sake, gave solemn testimony before the Sanhedrin and at the tribunal of Pontius Pilate to those truths which, if to us they gave life, were to him the cause of death.

After Septuagesima the Tract from Psalm xx is sung: "Thou hast given him his heart's desire; and hast not withholden from him the will of his lips. For thou hast prevented him with blessings of sweetness. Thou hast set on his head a crown of precious stones." In these three verses of the psalm we have a complete exposition of the economy of grace with regard to the predestination of the saints. First the gentle and efficacious influence of divine grace prevents them; next follows their own correspondence with it, the desire of their hearts, the prayer of their lips; and lastly their glorification in the beatific vision.

The Post-Communion is the same as for the feast of St Felix, on January 14.

The feast of St Timothy, the disciple of St Paul, is, as it were, a preparation for that of his Master, just as on the bronze door which closes the vault of the *Confessio* in the Patriarchal Basilica of St Paul are represented the figures of Titus and Timothy, as though even now they could not bear to be separated from the great apostle. This same thought of uniting the memory of Timothy to that of Paul originally suggested that the Roman martyr Timothy should be buried near the tomb of the mighty Teacher of the Gentiles, *ut Paulo Apostolo, ut quondam, Timotheus adhaereret.*

JANUARY 25

Conversion of St Paul the Apostle

Station at St Paul.

This feast, which in the Martyrology of St Jerome is simply called *" Romae translatio Sancti Pauli/'* is altogether missing in the ancient Roman Sacramentaries and Capitularies, and appears to have been adopted by the Papal Court under Frankish influence only about the tenth century. As a matter of fact the Mass in *conversione sancti Pauli apostoli* is to be found in the Gothic Missal, in which it follows that of St Peter's Chair, a connection sufficiently significant for us to be able to exclude the hypothesis that the feast really commemorates the chronological date of the conversion of the great apostle of the Gentiles on the road to Damascus.

It is not easy to determine the origin and development of the festival. The *translatio sancti Pauli* in the martyrologies may possibly refer to one of the hypotheses given below :

(a) The translation of the sacred body of the apostle from its secret place of burial *ad catacumbas* on the Via Appia to its primitive tomb on the Via Ostiensis after Gallienus had restored their cemeteries to the Christians ;

(b) The rebuilding of his sepulchral basilica on the Via Ostiensis, begun by Theodosius, continued by Valentinian and Honorius, and completed by St Leo I ;

(c) The occasional alteration of the date of his festival station on account of some impediment, as when the Romans once during the absence from Rome of Pope Leo I put off celebrating the feast of SS Peter and Paul until his return ;

(d) Lastly, and more probably, a transference in some way to Gaul of veils which had been applied to the tomb of St Paul and of filings from his chains.

These objects of devotion were also incorrectly described as " relics " and were deposited in the altar under the designation of *translatio,* which word was inscribed even in the local martyrologies, and thanks to a kind of *fictio juris,* they came to be regarded as an annex or extension of the real tomb of the apostle at Rome. The indication *Romae* must have slipped into the *Laterculus* through the ignorance of the amanuensis who, when he read the words *translatio sancti Pauli,* instead of associating them with some church at Autun or Arles, etc., took it for granted that they could only apply to Rome.

This winter festival of St Paul, whether of Roman origin

or not, was connected in Gallic countries with the feast of St Peter's Chair, and this at a time when Rome was no longer celebrating either of them, if the Apostolic See had ever at any time kept this *translatio* of St Paul. Little by little, however, the historical facts were forgotten, and for the idea of a material translation of the relics of St Paul there was substituted that of a psychological and spiritual translation or change which befell the apostle on the way to Damascus; so from his physical *translatio* there was evolved his mystical *conversio*.

The feast of the Conversion of St Paul is noted as being on this day in the Bernese *Laterculus* of the Martyrology of St Jerome: *Translatio et conversio sancti Pauli in Damasco.* In the *Ordo* of Peter Amelius of the fourteenth century this solemnity is given precedence even over the Sunday Office.

In the Patriarchal Basilica of St Paul a most solemn station is held to-day, and, in the absence of the Supreme Pontiff, the abbots of that famous monastery which once gave to the Church St Gregory VII celebrate in accordance with ancient tradition the divine Sacrifice with Pontifical rites, upon the same Papal altar which still stands over the sepulchre of the apostle.

The Introit is like that of the Commemoration of St Paul on June 30, and expresses the conviction of the apostle that God the just judge will give him the reward of his labours. In order to explain this thought more clearly to Timothy, St Paul, who is now very near to the time of his martyrdom, employs a graceful simile. His good works are like a deposit which he commits to God, that he may keep it for him until the day of the *parousia.* The apostle puts all his trust in the Lord of whom he says he has full knowledge. The man who lays up his treasure in coffers, or buries it in the ground, runs the risk of having it stolen by thieves or eaten by moths. God, on the other hand, is just and faithful, and on the great day of judgement, that day of days, he will, as St Paul says, give back the deposit together with the merited reward.

Introit (2 Timothy i, 12): "I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day; being a just judge."

The Gregorian melody which accompanies this Introit seems as if it had been composed by the musician especially for the festival station in the vast Basilica of St Paul; it is unsurpassed in its solemnity and impressiveness.

The Collect is very similar to that given above for January 18: "O God, who hast taught the whole world by the preaching of blessed Paul the Apostle; mercifully grant that we who this day keep the memory of his conversion may,

by following his example, advance in the way that leadeth unto thee."

The Commemoration of St Peter is made as on January 18.

Then follows the Lesson from the Acts of the Apostles with the account of the Conversion of St Paul·. The triumph of grace has never been more wonderful than in this. Paul, at Jerusalem, was the most formidable enemy of the infant Church ; yet Jesus not only brings his plans to naught, but wills that the adversary of yesterday shall become the apostle of to-morrow and the teacher of the truth throughout the world. Without in any way diminishing the glory of the Twelve, St Paul shall become " The Apostle," because he had at first been the fiercest adversary of all. Therefore he is destined to draw the triumphal chariot of Christ further than any of the others, from Arabia to the Pillars of Hercules, so that he shall be able to write, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, for the edification of the churches : *plus omnibus laboravi.*

This universal apostolate of St Paul is emphasised in a distich which collectors of Roman epigraphs transcribed in early days on the sepulchre of the great apostle :

HIC · POSITVS · CAELI · TRANSCENDIT · CVLMINA · PAVLVS
CVI · DEBET · TOTVS · QVOD · CHRISTO · CREDIDIT · ORBIS

In the highest heaven lives Paul, whose body lies here,
To whom the whole world owes its faith in Christ.

The late composition of this Mass is betrayed at once by the Gradual and the Tract. The composer seems quite to have lost sight of the original psalmodie character which they had in the Office of the Synagogue, and has merely strung together as best he could various verses from the Epistles of St Paul, very beautiful and well chosen, but certainly out of place here. Fortunately the melody, which is full of feeling and of classic elegance, supplies what is wanting.

Gradual (Galatians ii, 8) : " He who wrought in Peter to the apostleship, wrought in me also among the Gentiles, and they knew the grace of God which was given to me. The grace of God in me hath not been void : but his grace always remaineth in me."

Alleluiatic verse: ''The great St Paul, the vessel of election, is indeed worthily to be glorified, who also deserved to possess the twelfth throne."

After Septuagesima, the alleluiatic verse being omitted, the following Tract is read : " Thou art a vessel of election, holy Paul the Apostle : indeed, thou art worthily to be glorified. The preacher of truth, and doctor of the Gentiles, in faith and

truth. Through thee all the Gentiles have known the grace of God. Intercede for us to God, who chose thee."

This is the greatest of all the graces bestowed upon St Paul, that not only did he preach the name of Jesus before kings and peoples of all nations during his life, but that even after his death his evangelical ministry is continued by means of his inspired letters, which the sacred Liturgy never omits to read in the divine Office and in the Mass.

The Gospel is that of the Common of Abbots as on December 5, and is very well suited to the apostle, who by his conversion not only renounced his home and his family, but, in order to gain Christ, gave up also the advantages which his position as an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin and a disciple of Rabbi Gamaliel might have procured for him in the Hebrew community. All these things he says : *quae mihi fuerunt lucra, haec arbitratus sum ut stercora, ut Christum lucrifaciam.*[1]

The Offertory is identical with that of St Andrew's Day, November 30. The prayers before the eucharistie Anaphora and after the Communion are the same as those of January 18 ; the Preface is that common to the feasts of apostles. The verse for the Communion of the people is taken from to-day's Gospel : " Amen I say to you, that you who have left ail things, and followed me, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting."

The poverty which many religious orders profess, after the examples of the apostles, as part of their vows, is a perpetual act of praise to the divine Providence to whom they confide themselves. The history of nearly twenty centuries is a proof that God, for his part, has never failed their hope. Thus the Psalmist assures us, recalling his own experience : *Junior fui etenim senui, et non vidi justum derelictum, nec semen ejus quaerens panem.*

This feast of the Conversion of St Paul was formerly kept with great solemnity in the medieval Liturgy. The Pope himself often went to celebrate the stational Mass at the tomb of the apostle, a custom of which some traces have remained in the Liturgy. Whilst in the other patriarchal basilicas of Rome, the Pope does not usually grant permission for the respective Cardinal Archpriests to celebrate Mass on the Papal altar, an exception is made in favour of St Paul's, and every year on this day the abbot of that monastery enjoys the Papal privilege of celebrating Pontifical High Mass at the very altar which is erected over the tomb of the apostle.

The reason why so much importance is given in the Liturgy to the conversion of St Paul on the road to Damascus is due

[1] Philippians iii, 7.8.

to the apologetic value of such a sudden change, so that, after the miracle of Christ's resurrection, no other prodigy in the history of the early Church, all the circumstances being taken into account, is a stronger proof of the divine origin ol Christianity than this marvellous conversion of Saul.

Pope Damasus wrote these verses in commemoration of this wonder :

Jamdudum Saulus, procerum praecepta secutus,
Cum Domino patrias vellet praeponere leges,
Abnueret sanctos Christum laudasse prophetas,
Caedibus adsiduis cuperet discerpere plebem,
Cum lacerat sanctae matris pia foedera coecus,
Post tenebras verum meruit cognoscere lumen,
Temptatus sensit possit quid gloria Christi.
Auribus ut Domini vocem lucemque recepit,
Composuit mores Christi praecepta secutus.
Mutato placuit postquam de nomine Paulus
Mira fides rerum ; subito trans aethera vectus,
Noscere promeruit possent quid praemia vitae.
Conscendit raptus martyr penetralia Christi,
Tertia lux caeli tenuit paradisus euntem ;
Conloquiis Domini fruitur, secreta reservat,
Gentibus et populis jussus praedicere vera,
Profundum penetrare maris noctemque diemque
Visere, cui magnum satis est vidisse latentem.
Verbera, vincla, famem, lapides, rabiemque ferarum,
Carceris inluviem, virgas, tormenta, catenas,
Naufragium, lachrymas, serpentis dira venena,
Stigmata non timuit portare in corpore Christi.
Credentes docuit possent quo vincere mortem.
Dignus amore Dei, vivit per saecla magister,
Versibus his breviter, fateor, sanctissime Doctor
Paule, tuos Damasus, volui, monstrare triumphos.

For many a year had Saul followed the teaching of the Elders,
And before the laws of God had put those of his own nation,
Refusing to acknowledge that the Prophets had rendered homage unto Christ.
Whilst he with insatiable cruelty strove to tear in pieces the flock
And sought to destroy the tender structure of our holy Mother the Church.
On a sudden he was blinded, and after walking so long in darkness, he at length merited to know the true light,
And to learn that the glory of Christ was far more potent than he.
Scarcely had he heard the voice of the Lord than he at once regained his sight
And reformed his whole life in obedience to the precepts of Christ,
Changing his name from Saul into that of Paul.
O wondrous story ! Suddenly was he raised in ecstasy above the heavens,
And was enabled to foretaste how immense is the reward of life eternal.
The future martyr ascended to the innermost sanctuary of Christ,
And in his ascension to Paradise was rapt even to the third heaven.
There it was granted to him to converse with the Lord, but these words he kept secret.
Commanded by God to preach the truth to Gentiles and peoples,
He penetrated the depth of the sea and therein passed a night and dav.

He to whom would have sufficed bis vision of God, great and unknown,
Stripes and bonds, hunger and stonings, the raging of wild beasts,
The squalor of prisons, the rod, the torture, the chain,
Shipwreck and sorrow, the serpent's deadly venom,
The wounds of Christ imprinted on his body, he feared not to bear.
He taught the faithful how to overcome death itself,
Worthy recipient of God's love unsurpassed, he lives and teaches through the ages.
In these brief verses I here declare, O Paul, thou most holy Doctor,
That I, Damasus, have wished to make known thy triumphs unto all.

JANUARY 26

St Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr*

The remembrance of this famous Father of the newly born Church occurs at a very opportune moment in the Christmas cycle, when it seems as though the most illustrious defenders of Christian doctrine had gathered together around the crib of the Infant Jesus. The Church of Rome least of all could omit the feast of Polycarp from her calendar. In times gone by she had received him as a pilgrim when, during the lifetime of Pope Anicetus, he had been brought to the banks of the Tiber by the controversy regarding the date of Easter. On that occasion the Pope, in order to do still greater honour to the aged disciple of St John the Evangelist, had granted to him the privilege of celebrating the eucharistie synaxis in his stead.

Polycarp suffered martyrdom in the amphitheatre of Smyrna about the year 155 on February 23, but his feast occurs to-day in the Roman Martyrology, since it is the date given in that of St Jerome.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Martyr and Bishop, as on the feast of St Eusebius on December 16, but as it commemorates a disciple of St John the Evangelist the Lesson is taken from his master's First Epistle, in which the apostle of sacred love speaks of the mutual charity which we should have for one another, and by which we must imitate that which our Saviour has showed towards us. God is love, therefore he who loves dwells in God and God in him. The devil, on the contrary, is hatred, for he hates God, he hates himself, he hates everybody and everything. "I am that wretched being who cannot love," Satan said one day to St Catherine of Siena. Let us, then, beware of harbouring in our hearts thoughts of rancour, of envy and spite, in a word, of anything that is contrary to the kindly charity of Christ's precepts, since all these feelings come, like those of Cain, from the wicked one.

Lesson (i John iii, 10-16): "Most dearly beloved: Who-

soever is not just, is not of God, nor he that loveth not his brother. For this is the declaration, which you have heard from the beginning·, that you should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and killed his brother. And wherefore did he kill him? Because his own works were wicked, and his brother's just. Wonder not, brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself. In this we have known the charity of God, because he hath laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

The Gospel is like that for St Felix *in Pincis,* on the fourteenth of this month.

The highest praise which can be given to St Polycarp is contained in the words shouted out by the people of Smyrna as they raged against him in the amphitheatre: "This is the father of the Christians, the Master of all Asia." Without God we can do nothing, but a soul empty of self which lends itself willingly to the inward influence of the Holy Ghost is capable of converting and sanctifying the whole world.

JANUARY 27

St John Chrysostom, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church*

This undaunted defender of the truth perished under the hardships of his exile at Comana in Pontus on September 14, 407; but as on that day the Roman Church celebrated first the feast of the martyrs Cornelius and Cyprian, and then the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, his festival was transferred to this day, on which recurs the anniversary of the translation of his body to Constantinople.

St John Chrysostom died a victim to the miseries and sorrows which he suffered for the Faith in the undaunted pursuit of his episcopal duties in defiance of the depraved Court of Byzantium. But because certain prelates, who undoubtedly professed the Catholic Faith, took part in the persecution which was stirred up against him—this being permitted by God for his greater refining—and because he did not actually die a violent death in defence of Catholic dogma, therefore the Mass offered in his honour is not that of a martyr, but of a Confessor and Bishop.

The feast of St John Chrysostom in the Roman Calendar has a special significance, and shows how the Papal primacy becomes a source of good and a guarantee of liberty for the

whole Catholic Church. John, being overwhelmed by his opponents and deposed from his see by the sentence of those bishops who were subservient to the Court, appealed to the Apostolic See. Pope Innocent I immediately took up his cause, annulled the unjust sentence, and, after the death of the saint, required of his adversaries as a condition of their remaining in Communion with the Holy See that Chrysostom's name should once more be inscribed in the episcopal diptychs, which action, according to the legal customs of that time, almost amounted to an equipollent canonization of the famous Confessor.

The Oriental Christians of to-day have too easily forgotten the work of the Roman Church, and the struggles sustained by the popes in defence of the orthodoxy and the reputation of their greatest doctors, such as Basil, Athanasius, Chrysostom, etc. But history remains the same and shows that, especially as regards the East, the exercise of the Papal primacy was in those early days the guarantee of the first (Ecumenical Councils and the anchor of salvation to which, full of confidence, those leaders of Catholic Orthodoxy clung in the shipwreck which was already threatening to overwhelm the unhappy Eastern churches.

The Introit is identical with that assigned for the feast of St Ambrose on December 7, and is common to all feasts of Doctors.

In the Collect the Church begs through the merits of the great " Exile " for heavenly grace, especially for that of an inspired faith rich in strenuous works.

" O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy heavenly grace give increase to thy Church, which thou hast vouchsafed to make illustrious by the glorious merits and teaching of blessed John Chrysostom, thy confessor and bishop. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is also that of the feast of St Ambrose. Paul, on the eve of his martyrdom, or, as he himself expresses it, " being ready to be sacrificed," warns Timothy of the dangers threatening the Church through the work of false teachers and of the necessity of opposing all these inventions of human pride, by a pure doctrine and by a patient and forbearing apostolate worthy of a minister of Jesus Christ.

Nor is this enough. Paul has preached and has not ever spared himself, yet his mission is not completed. As Christ, after having taught the people, offered himself upon the cross in order to merit for the souls of men the grace of believing in the Gospel and being saved, so, too, must be the work of the priest of Jesus. Besides being the teacher, he must also be the victim, because it is only through suffering that he can merit the glory of spiritual fatherhood.

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The Gradual is the same as that of the feast of St Damasus on December 11.

The alleluiatic verse (James i, 12) is not from the Common of Bishops or Doctors, but is very applicable to St John Chrysostom, who succumbed to the cruelty of his persecutors. " Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life."

The Tract which is said after Septuagesima is the one given for January 15. This rule is always followed for the feasts of all Confessors and Martyrs that occur in this cycle of preparation for the Paschal Festivity.

The Secret runs thus : " May the loving prayer of thy holy bishop John Chrysostom fail us not, O Lord ; may it make our gifts acceptable to thee, and ever win for us thy forgiveness. Through our Lord."

The Communion is like that of the feast of St Sabbas on December 5, but contrary to the ancient custom in Masses of the saints, it does not correspond to the text of to-day's Gospel. This shows that the final compilation of the Mass for Doctors was made at a very late period, when this liturgical law had already fallen into disuse.

In the Post-Communion we say: ""May blessed John Chrysostom, thy bishop and illustrious doctor, draw nigh, O Lord, we beseech thee, to make intercession for us ; so that thy sacrifice may give us health. Through our Lord."

Δὸ£α τὼ Θεφ *πάντων eveKcv.* In all things may God be praised ! This was the last cry of this valiant champion of the Faith when death was already drawing near to put an end to his sufferings and to deliver him from the hand of his tormentors. Most assuredly may God be praised in all things, but most of all when he grants us the inestimable honour of enduring something for his sake, for the cross is ever the surest means of making good progress in the ways of the Lord.

JANUARY 28

Nativity of St Agnes, Virgin and Martyr

Station at St Agnes

The most recent authorities on the rubrics are of opinion that this second feast of the famous Roman martyr is merely that of the Octave of her *natalis.* The ancient Sacramentaries, however, show most clearly that to-day is celebrated the actual temporal birth of St Agnes, so much so that they call this feast: S *Agnae de nativitate,* to distinguish it from the

other which they term *de passione sua.* The Gelasian Sacramentary expresses itself with the utmost precision on this point : *Sic enim ab exordio sui usque in finem beati certaminis extitit gloriosa, ut ejus nec initium debeamus praeterire, nec finem.*

The Church usually celebrates the day of a saint's death as his *natalis;* but at Rome, the early popes made an exception to this rule for St Agnes, and on account of the fame which her *cultus* acquired, the day on which she was born to divine grace and to the light of this world was also solemnized. In later times the scholastics, speaking of the feasts of the nativity of the Baptist and of the Blessed Virgin, declared that the Church celebrates these two births alone with liturgical rites, because all the others were stained by original sin. The ancient feast S *Agnae de nativitate* does not, however, oppose the teaching of the theologians, since in this case no privilege in any way detracting from baptism is concerned, but it merely celebrates the glories of the most pure martyr who was filled with divine grace from her cradle.

Further, the object of this feast is not the birth of St Agnes *qua talis,* but, as is usual to this day when the Church solemnizes the centenary of the birth of any of the saints, the occurrence of the birthday is taken advantage of to honour and celebrate directly the eminent sanctity of this most valiant and spotless Roman Virgin.

The Mass is taken from the Common of Virgin Martyrs.

The Antiphon for the Introit comes from Psalm xliv : *de virginitate:* " All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance : after her shall virgins be brought to the King; her neighbours shall be brought to thee in gladness and rejoicing." These virgin friends of the Blessed Mother of God whose praises we here sing are those pure souls who, following her example, consecrate the lily of their virginity to the Lamb of God.

In the Collect we pray thus : " O God, who dost gladden us by the yearly festival of blessed Agnes, thy virgin and martyr; mercifully grant that, as we honour her in this office, so we may follow the example of her holy life."

As a matter of historical interest, we also give the words of the Collect which is found in the Gelasian Sacramentary :

Adesto nobis, omnipotens Deus, beatae Agnetis festa repetentibus, quam hodiernae festivitatis prolatam exortu ineffabili munere sublevasti.

Grant us thy assistance, O almighty God, on this day, when, for the second time, we celebrate the feast of Blessed Agnes, who first saw the light on this festival and who was exalted by thy grace to such sublime heights.

The Lesson is the same as on the feast of St Lucy, December 13.

The Gradual is drawn from the usual Psalm xliv: "With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign, ℣. Because of truth, and meekness, and justice: and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully."

Here we see the valiant virgin who, girded with the weapons of the Holy Ghost, faith, charity, and fortitude, makes ready to join battle with Satan in order to keep faith with her divine Spouse Jesus.

The alleluiatic verse is part of the same Psalm: ℣. "After her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbours shall be brought to thee with gladness. Alleluia."

The Tract which is read after Septuagesima is also derived from Psalm xliv: "Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: for the King hath greatly desired thy beauty, ℣. All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance: the daughters of kings in thy honour, ℣. After her shall virgins be brought to the King: her neighbours shall be brought to thee. ℣. They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing: they shall be brought into the temple of the King."

In this *epithalamium* God demands of the soul above all things the renunciation of her first ties and the abandonment of all that may still in any way bring her under the dominion of her former corrupt nature. The soul being thus entirely stripped and emptied of herself is then clothed again by God with the garments and jewels of grace, so that purified and adorned she may at length be admitted to the eternal nuptials with her Immortal Bridegroom.

The Gospel Lesson, noted in the Würzburg Codex, is similar to that one which was read on January 18, the feast of St Prisca.

The same applies to the verse for the Offertory.

The Secret is as follows: "We beseech thee, O Lord, that there may come down upon these victims a bountiful blessing which, of thy mercy, shall w'ork sanctification within us and gladden us at the festivals of thy martyrs."

Equally beautiful and solemn is the Secret in the Gelasian Sacramentary:

Grata tibi sint, quaesumus, Domine, munera quibus sanctae Agnetis magnifica solemnitas recensetur; sic enim ab exordio sui usque in finem beati certaminis extitit gloriosa, ut ejus nec initium debeamus praeterire, nec finem.

May the gifts be pleasing to thee, O Lord, with which we solemnly celebrate the feast of St Agnes, who from her first seeing the light until her blessed martyrdom was worthy of so great glory, that it is not fitting that we should let either her birth or her death pass unnoticed.

The Gregorian Sacramentary assigns for to-day this Preface in honour of the martyr :

Pater omnipotens, aeterne Deus, beatae Agnetis natalitia geminantes. Vere enim hujus honorandus est dies qua sic terrena generatione processit, ut ad Divinitatis consortium perveniret. Per Christum.

Father almighty, everlasting God, celebrating for the second time the birthday of Blessed Agnes. This day on which she was born is indeed worthy of honour ; for this she came into the world, in order that she might come to eternal union with God. Through Christ.

The Communion is from the Gospel of the day : " The kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls ; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, gave all that he had, and bought it."

We see here the price of Christian perfection, of paradise, of God. That price is what each one possesses. He who has more, must give more. He who has less will give less. The thing that matters is that each one should give all that fie has.

The Post-Communion is the following: ''We have received, O Lord, the votive sacraments of this yearly festival; grant, we beseech thee, that they may bring us healing remedies both for this mortal life and for life everlasting."

St Agnes is one of the privileged souls whom the Lord fills with his prevenient grace, and espouses to his heart from their tenderest years. The Church justly rejoices to-day in the perfume of those lilies of virginity amongst whom the Immaculate Lamb feeds and takes delight; for, as the blood of the martyr was a fruitful seed bringing forth new Christians, so the example of her spotless chastity drew a numerous company of virgins to follow the Divine Bridegroom.

In the Gregorian Sacramentary the final blessing or the *Oratio super populum,* which is still included in the Missal but only for use at the Lenten Stations, is the same prayer as that one quoted above from the Gelasian Sacramentary for the Collect.

It is a great loss, not only to sacred literature but to our devotion as well, that the Roman Missal was deprived in the last centuries of the Middle Ages of so much of its primitive liturgical treasure.

JANUARY 29

St Francis de Sales, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church*

The great saint who was the personification of gentleness, benignity, and love of God, died at Lyons on December 28; but, as that day λνηβ already dedicated to the feast of the Holy Innocents, to whom St Francis had great devotion, his festival was deferred until to-day, which is really the anniversary of the translation of his body to Annécy.

The Mass is the Common of Doctors, but, as on the feast of St Hilary, the Collect is proper. It was composed by Alexander VII (1655-66), to whom the saint had foretold his vocation to the priesthood and his election to the Papal See.

Two flourishing religious orders represent to-day in the Church the spiritual progeny of St Francis de Sales. These are the nuns of the Visitation, actually founded by himself, and the Salesian Congregation, which the Venerable Don Bosco owed to the heart and mind of the holy Bishop of Geneva.

Collect : " O God, by whose gracious will blessed Francis, thy confessor and bishop, became all things unto all men for the saving of their souls ; mercifully grant that, being filled with the sweetness of thy love, we may, through the guidance of his counsels and by the aid of his merits, attain unto the joys of everlasting life. Through our Lord."

The chief characteristics of St Francis were gentleness and humility of spirit, by means of which virtues he converted about seventy thousand heretics to the Catholic Faith, and led a number of souls to the very heights of perfection. Harshness of manner, impatience, and aggressive zeal are not always the best methods by which souls may be led to Jesus Christ, because virtue in order to be loved must show itself loveable and accessible to all. What is the secret of such great unselfishness? The being filled with the love of God, for, as St Paul says, *Charitas non quaerit quae sua sunt.*

JANUARY 30

St Martina, Virgin and Martyr*

Although Urban VIII attempted to popularize the veneration of this martyr by restoring her basilica near the *Career Mamertini* in the *Forum Romanum,* and by composing hymns

proper to her feast according to the classic rules, yet she has remained almost entirely unknown to ancient Roman hagiography. Her *cultus* in Rome dates from the time of Pope Donus, who about the years 676-78 caused her to be represented in the mosaic of the apse between the figures of Pope Honorius I and of himself.

The Bernese *Laterculus* of the Martyrology of St Jerome records the name of the saint on January 1: *Romae . . . et Martini martyris.* We are concerned, however, with a female saint practically a stranger in the City, whose origin and history are alike unknown.

An *Oratorium sanctae Martinae* is spoken of by John the Deacon in his Life of St Gregory,[1] but it stood on the Via Ostiensis in the *fundus Barbilianus.* This localization may put us on the track towards discovering the whereabouts of St Martina's dwelling-place.

In her *Acta* mention is made of her companions in martyrdom who were put to death on November 15, and from the account of the discovery of the bodies of St Martina and her fellow martyrs, Concordius and Epiphanius, in the time of Urban VIII, we gather that they came originally from a certain locality on the Via Ostiensis.[2] It is strange that precisely on that same road in the *fundus Barbilianus,* there existed in the ninth century an oratory in honour of St Martina, served by monks. Have we then here a group of martyrs from the *suburbanum Ostiense,* translated to Rome under Honorius I? This hypothesis would seem to be very probable.

The two churches of St Adrian and of St Martina were close together, and formed but a single building, one church being the great hall of the Roman 'Senate; the other, the adjoining office or *secretarium,* separated from the Curia only by a short portico.

The Mass is the Common of a Virgin and Martyr, as it is for the feast of St Barbara on December 4.

JANUARY 31

SS Cyrus and John, Martyrs

Station at their basilica on the Via Portuensis.

In the ancient Roman Missals prior to the Tridentine reform the feast was kept on this day of the two martyrs Cyrus and John, of the group of miracle-workers, whose sepulchral basilica outside Alexandria had become in the

[1] 93 (p L' LXXV, col. 237).
[a] *Act. SS. Jan.* 1, p. 18.

fifth century the goal of continual pilgrimages of devout and sick persons, somewhat as is the case at the present time with the basilica of Lourdes.

The Alexandrian colony at Rome gloried in proclaiming the merits and the fame of their own saints, even when faced with the great Roman sanctuaries, so they built a little basilica, which is still to be seen, in honour of the martyrs Cyrus and John, on the road to Porto, almost opposite the Egyptian sanctuary of St Mennas, which was on the Via Ostiensis, on the other bank of the Tiber.

It appears that in the Middle Ages some relics of the two wonder-working saints were brought to Rome, and placed in the vault still existent under their church.

This inscription which may be read over the door of the sanctuary is interesting :

CORPORA · SANCTA · CYRI · RENITENT · HIC · ATQVE · JOHANNIS
QVAE · QVONDAM · ROMAE · DEDIT · ALEXANDRIA · MAGNA

Three other churches in Rome testified formerly to the veneration in which the faithful held these two Egyptian martyrs. They are St Abba Cyrus or *Sanctorum Cyri et Johannis* in the Trastevere, erected in the house of a certain matron called Theodora, where the relics of the martyrs had rested temporarily on first reaching Rome. A second church Sant' Abba Cyrus *de Militiis,* on the Quirinal Hill, at the side facing the *jorum Divi Trajani,* and lastly, the one which John the Deacon in his Life of St Gregory calls *basilica Sanctorum Cyri et Johannis non longe a flumine Tiberi* (Lib. IV), and which rose up behind the deaconry of Sta Maria in Portico. In the biography of Gregory IV it is spoken of under the title: *Ecclesia beati Abba Cyri atque Archangeli, ad elephantum.*

St Cyrus with his honoured title of Abba or Apa, as the Copts say, gradually came to be the only one of the two saints remembered by the Roman people, his companion John being quite forgotten. Even St Cyrus was not very fortunate in the last centuries of the Middle Ages, for, although until the latter half of the past century the faithful were in the habit of flocking in great numbers to his basilica on the Via Portuensis on July 21, the anniversary of the translation of the holy relics to Rome, yet the name of Abba Cyrus was strangely distorted in the mouth of the Roman plébs until, even his sex having been changed, it became unrecognizable. From Abba Ciro, Paciro, Pacero, Passero, was evolved Passera, and to this day the church is commonly called : Santa Passera.

The Greeks, too, celebrate on this same day the feast of

the two holy martyrs Cyrus and John, and give them the title of *thaumaturgi* and of *anargyri.* In their calendars a second commemoration of these saints is entered on June 28, which is the date of the finding of their bodies during the reign of the Emperor Arcadius in the time of the famous Alexandrian Patriarch, Theophilus.

JANUARY 31

St Peter Nolasco, Confessor*

This feast was first introduced into the Roman Missal by Alexander VII as a semi-double; later it was raised by Clement X to a double. Although St Peter Nolasco died on Christmas Day, his feast is kept on this day because it is the first which is not occupied by the Office of some other saint.

The Mass is throughout, with the exception of the Collect, that of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop.

The Introit is like that of the feast of St Paul the first Hermit on January 15.

The Collect records the work of the saint in founding a religious congregation under the title of our Lady of Mercy, or, as it was then called, *della Mercede.* " O God, who for an example of thy love didst divinely inspire blessed Peter to beget within thy Church a new family for the ransom of the faithful, grant through his intercession that we may be loosed from the bonds of sin, and enjoy freedom for evermore in our heavenly country: who livest."

Nothing shows more clearly the vitality of the Catholic Church, than the continuous founding and succession of new orders, which meet the particular circumstances and special requirements of each century. The religious life is one, enduring and immutable in its essential principles, yet it is endowed with a marvellous adaptability in knowing how to adjust itself to all the demands of Christian society at all times and in all places. This power of adaptability is so benign that it reflects that of the Holy Ghost in the interior guidance of souls, and reveals an unfailing vital principle.

The Lesson is taken from the First Epistle to the Corinthians (iv, 9-14) where St Paul, casting scorn upon the excessive softness of his followers in that city, who were blinded by passion and too proud to admit their faults, describes the humiliations, hardships, and labours of his apostolic ministry. To suffer and to be despised for Christ's sake, this is the especial grace of the true disciple of Jesus.

The Gradual is that of the Common of Doctors.

The allcluiatic verse is derived from Psalm cxi : " Blessed

is the man that feareth the Lord : he delights exceedingly in his commandments."

The Gospel comes from St Luke (xii, 32-34) in which Jesus ensures to those who voluntarily embrace poverty for love of the holy Gospel, not only a rich reward in heaven, but the special care of the Divine Providence, who prepares for them also a *regnum* in this world, primarily spiritual, but endowed with such material conditions as are necessary to its character of a visible society—that, in fact, of the Catholic Church.

The Secret and the Post-Communion are the same as on January 15, the feast of St Paul the first Hermit.

The Antiphon for the Communion is drawn from the Gospel of St Matthew (xix, 28), where Jesus promises a hundredfold in this world, and eternal life in the next, to him who shall abandon all for him who is All, or rather, who shall abandon this " infinite emptiness of all things," as a poet has sadly described this world.

FEASTS IN FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 1

St Ignatius of Antioch, Bishop and Martyr*

The feast of St Ignatius in the Roman Missal is a realization of the last wish of the martyr, who in writing to the Romans expressed the desire that the news of his martyrdom should reach them at the moment when the altar was prepared for the sacrifice, so that they might all be able to unite in raising a hymn of thanksgiving to God because he had deigned to call the Bishop of Syria to himself from the City of the Cæsars and the blood-stained amphitheatre of Rome.

Ignatius was torn to pieces by lions on October 17, somewhere about the years 110–118, but in the later Middle Ages his feast was fixed for this day among the Latins. The name of the heroic bishop was included in the diptychs of the Mass from the very earliest times, but as with all the other martyrs of the first two centuries, a special office in his honour was not celebrated until much later; it was Pius IX who finally raised his feast to the rank of a double.

The Roman Church commemorates St Ignatius every day by name in the prayer preceding the *Pater Noster* known as the " Great intercession," yet the medieval Sacramentaries do not indicate any station or synaxis whatever in his honour. The reason of this is obvious : the material basis for such liturgical *cultus* was wanting—that is to say, the tomb.

The identification of the amphitheatre at Rome in which St Ignatius was exposed to the wild beasts with that of Flavius Vespasian is very probable, but cannot be absolutely proved, since at that time the Imperial City possessed several amphitheatres. As to the special veneration paid to the martyr in the neighbouring Basilica of St Clement, where a late tradition maintains that the great Bishop of Antioch had been buried, the oldest document in which this is mentioned does not date back beyond the beginning of the twelfth century, and that is the inscription under the mosaic in the apse, but even then it refers only to a small relic of St Ignatius placed within the wall on which there was a representation of the crucifixion.

DE · LIGNO · CRVCIS · JACOBI · DENTE · IGNATIIQVE
IN · SVPRASCRIPTI · REQVIESCVNT · CORPORE · CHRISTI

The Introit is from the Epistle of St Paul to the Galatians (vi, 14): " God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ : by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world."

Then follows Psalm cxxxi : " O Lord, remember David and all his meekness, ℣. Glory be."

The Collect is of the Common of a Martyr and Bishop as on December 10, the feast of St Melchiades.

The Epistle of St Ignatius to the Roman Church, to the " President of the bond of love " as he calls her, was certainly read in the second century to the assembled faithful of Rome before the holy Sacrifice at this very moment of the sacred action.

Changed liturgical rules no longer allow of such an irregular proceeding ; therefore we read to-day in place of the letter a small portion from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, bearing a great resemblance to the vigorous style of the Martyr of Antioch, who longed ardently for the moment when the wild beasts would render him a victim for Christ's sake. It seems, indeed, as though St Paul had inspired the wonderful passage corresponding to it in the Epistle of St Ignatius.

In the Lesson (Rom. viii, 35-39) St Paul, carried away by ardent charity, as he considers the love which God has shown towards us in giving us Jesus Christ crucified, feels himself so firmly united to him by the supernatural bond of charity, that, anticipating, as it were, that stability and confirmation in grace to which in heaven is granted the beatific vision, and deeming as unworthy of consideration the severe trials of the apostolate and the sword of martyrdom, which he already realizes as being now close at hand, he cries out in a wave of holy enthusiasm: " What thing shall now prevail

to part me from Christ? Neither persecution nor death nor even eternity shall ever be able to separate me from God, the seal of whose ineffable love is indeed my crucified Lord himself."

The Gradual is like that which is sung on December 4 for the feast of St Peter Chrysologus.

The alleluiatic verse for the feast of this lover of the cross comes from St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (ii, 19-20): " With Christ I am nailed to the cross: I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Here we have the reason of so many labours and austerities undergone by the saints; it was not so much they who lived, but Jesus who carried on in them the mystery of his cross, for the redemption of the world. This is a wonderful thought and one which, if seriously meditated upon, should inspire us with deep reverence for that mystical life which our Saviour desires shall be led in each Christian soul, but particularly in those who are more especially dedicated to him, such as priests and religious men and women.

The Tract, as on January 24, the feast of St Timothy, is said after Septuagesima instead of the alleluiatic verse.

The Gospel (John xii, 24-26) is in part the same as that for the Saturday before Palm Sunday. In this short extract Jesus likens the life of a Christian to a grain of wheat, which in order to germinate must first die in the ground. This simile is well suited to the feast of St Ignatius, who, inspired by these words of the Gospel, and perhaps also by a passage in the *Didache,* wrote : " I am the wheat of Christ : would that I may be ground by the teeth of lions so that I may become pure bread."

The Offertory is as on the vigil of St Andrew, November 29.

The Secret is that for the feast of St Felix *in Pincis* on January 14.

The Communion records the last prayer of the martyr when he had already heard in the circus the roaring of the raging lions : " I am the wheat of Christ : may I be ground by the fangs of beasts, so that I may be found to be pure bread." This last cry of St Ignatius echoed throughout the Church, and is recorded also by St Irenaeus of Lyons : *Quemadmodum quidam de nostris dixit, propter martyrium in Deum adjudicatus ad bestias: Quoniam frumentum sum*[1] *Christi, et per dentes bestiarum molar, ut mundus panis Deo inveniar.*

The Post-Communion is identical with that assigned to the feast of St Melchiades on December 10.

The virtue suggested to us to-day by the feast of St Ignatius for which we must ask through his intercession is

[1] *Adv. Haeres.,* v. 28, 4; *P.G.* VII, col. 1200-01.

that of faithful attachment to the Church and her hierarchy. It is this subject to which the saintly martyr returns with ever greater insistence in all his letters. There can be no Church where the legitimate authority of the bishop, the priests, and the deacons is not duly acknowledged.

Now, since heresy, however hidden it may be, always implies insubordination to one's pastors and teachers, the faithful have consequently, in an intimate communion with the hierarchy established by Jesus Christ, the safest and easiest means of avoiding the insidious artifices of the innovators.

FEBRUARY 2

Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or Candlemas Day

The origin of this feast must be looked for in Jerusalem, where in the *Peregrinatio Etheriae* we find it being celebrated as early as the last decades of the fourth century, under the name of *Quadragesima de Epiphania.* The Oriental Christians also celebrate on the feast of the Epiphany the first manifestation of the Word of God in human flesh.

An edict of Justinian in 542 introduced this festival at Constantinople, whence it spread throughout the East and also reached Rome. In the list of Gospels of the Wurzburg Codex, the feast *die II mensis februarii* has no title and is out of its proper order, a sure sign that it had only recently been brought to Rome. Towards the end of the seventh century, Sergius I, who was of Greek origin, added greatly to its importance by ordering that it should be preceded by a penitential procession to the Liberian Basilica, as on the other three great festivals of the Blessed Virgin. In this way the predominately Marian character of the feast became established, whereas originally amongst the Orientals it had been regarded rather as a feast of our Lord.

The early title of Ὑπαπαντή or *occurrus Domini* has left distinct traces on the Liturgy as we have it to-day. Thus the summons to the night vigils, the Lessons, the Collect, the Antiphons, and the Preface of Christmas still commemorate the meeting of Simeon and the Infant Jesus in the temple, giving to the *purificatio* of his Virgin Mother a somewhat secondary place. Indeed, this appellation itself does not appear in the *Liber Pontificalis* in which the statute of Pope Sergius is mentioned as referring to the *dies Sancti Simeonis.* It is found for the first time in Roman liturgical documents in the Gelasian Sacramentary, where, however, the title of *purificatio* displays a Gallican origin.

The stational procession had become so much a part of the liturgical customs of Rome that the silence of the Gclasian Sacramentary on this point does not authorize us to maintain that it had not as yet been instituted. Pope Sergius must certainly have had a precedent on which to base his decree. The Gregorian Sacramentary of the time of Adrian I undoubtedly alludes to it. Indeed, in an *Ordo Romanus* of the Codex of St Amand edited by Duchesne, we have a valuable description of the ceremony as it was carried out about the year 800.

At dawn on February 2, each title and deaconry in the city sent out its own parochial procession, which wended its way towards the Forum Romanum to the church of St Adrian. In order to guide their steps in the darkness through the ruins of the ancient buildings of Imperial Rome, the faithful carried lighted candles, whilst the clergy chanted psalms and sang antiphons, to which the people replied with the customary cry : *Kyrie eleison.* As soon as the Pope arrived with his deacons at the basilica of the martyr he entered the *Secretarium* and assumed the black *Paenula* as a mark of penitence, those immediately accompanying him doing the same.

Then the clergy and the various *scholae* of cantors were admitted into the presence of the Pontiff that they might each receive a candle from his hands. This distribution being ended, the cantors intoned the antiphon of the Introit: *Exsurge, Domine,* which is still preserved in our present Missal, and the Pope made his solemn entrance into the church of St Adrian. After the Introit followed the *Kyrie eleison,* as in all Masses. Next came the Collect—now preserved only in the Gregorian Sacramentary—after which the procession commenced.

The memory of the ancient *litania septiformis* was still so vivid in the liturgical use of Rome, that even in the ninth century the people divided themselves into seven companies, each one of which was preceded by its own cross. Afterwards—that is to say, in the late Middle Ages—we find that eighteen of the most highly venerated representations of the Saviour and of the Blessed Virgin to be found in the City had taken the place of these crosses. The Pope walked barefoot and was preceded by two acolytes with lighted candles in their hands. These walked on each side of the subdeacon who swung a thurible from which arose clouds of incense. Two *staurophori,* each bearing a cross, walked before the Pope, who was followed by the *scholae* of cantors in ordered ranks, chanting psalms.

The procession passed through the *Fora* of Nerva and of Trajan and moved towards the Esquiline, leaving on the right

ihc titular church of St Eudoxia. Thence it descended the hill near St Lucy *in Silice,* and passing behind the apse of the title of Equitius, again ascended the slight elevation of the hill where the church of St Praxedes stands, and from there proceeded directly towards the Liberian Basilica. The *scholae* sang antiphons and responsories translated from Greek into Latin, which arc still preserved in the Missal ; the clergy chanted psalms, or alternated with the responsory acrostic until, on drawing near to St Mary Major, the *litania ternaria* was sung, so called because each invocation was repeated three times.

After the procession, followed the Mass in which, according to the ancient stational rite, neither the *Kyrie* nor the *Gloria* was said.

The early Roman liturgical documents do not mention at all any special blessing of the candles. These indeed were distributed at Rome at all nocturnal processions and were not a peculiar feature of the feast of the *Hypapante.* One must come down to the tenth century before finding the rite of the blessing of the candles described in a Sacramentary of Corbie dedicated to Abbot Ratoldus, who died in 986.

At Rome the first mention of the blessing of the candles occurs in the *Ordo* of Benedict the Canon in the first half of the twelfth century ; but even then this blessing did not belong exclusively to the feast of " Candlemas," since in the other three solemn processions for the feasts of our Lady, mention is also made of blessed candles.

Ccncio Camerarius relates that in his time the Pope went on the morning of this feast with the cardinals to St Martina, and having there sung the Office of Terce, he distributed the candles, which had previously been blessed by the youngest of the cardinal priests, from a throne erected in the open air on the Sacra X'ia before the door of the basilica. Sext was sung in the neighbouring Basilica of St Adrian, where from the various titular churches of Rome the parochial clergy and their people assembled bearing crosses and pictures. When all were collected, the procession set out. Instead of his usual shoes and stockings the Pope wore sandals, but at the door of St Mary Major he took them off and entered the church barefooted ; for which reason before celebrating the stational Mass, he retired into the sacristy where his *cubicularii* had prepared hot water with which to wash his feet.

Blessing of the Candles

Synaxis at St Martina.

The Basilica of St Martina in the Forum Romanum is the original *Secretarium Senatus.* The prayers and the whole ceremony of the blessing of the candles which in the more recent *Ordines* precede the ancient Introit : *Exsurge,* evidence by the different place which they occupy, their late insertion in the Roman rite. Towards the end of the Middle Ages the blessing of the candles also took place at Rome in the Basilica of St Martina.

℣. The Lord be with you.
℟. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God, who didst create all things out of nothing, and by thy command didst cause this liquid to become perfect wax by the labour of bees: and who on this day didst fulfil the prayer of the righteous Simeon; we humbly beseech thee, that by the invocation of thy most holy Name, and by the intercession of blessed Mary ever a virgin, whose festival we this day devoutly keep, and by the prayers of all thy saints, thou wouldst vouchsafe to bless ✠ and hallow these candles for the service of men, and for the health of their bodies and souls, whether by land or sea ; and wouldst hear from thy holy heaven, and from the throne of thy majesty, the voice of this thy people, who desire to carry them in their hands with honour, and to praise thee with songs ; and wouldst be propitious to all that call upon thee, whom thou hast redeemed with the precious blood of thy Son : who liveth and reigneth. ℟. Amen.

Originally these and other similar forms for the blessing of candles, palms, incense, etc., were probably used in turn, whereas now all are recited as described in the Missal.

Let us pray.

Almighty, everlasting God, who on this day didst present thy only-begotten Son to be received in the arms of holy Simeon in thy holy temple ; we humbly entreat thy clemency, that thou wouldst vouchsafe to bless ✠, hallow ✠, and kindle with the light of thy heavenly benediction these candles, which we thy servants desire to receive and carry lighted in honour of thy Name; that by offering them to thee, our Lord God, being worthily inflamed with the holy fire of thy most sweet charity, we may deserve to be presented

in the holy temple of thy glory. Through the same Lord. !£·. Amen.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the true light, who enlightenest every-one that cometh into this world, pour forth thy blessing ›p upon these candles, and hallow ℗ them with the light of thy grace; and mercifully grant, that as these lights enkindled with visible fire drive forth the darkness of night, so our hearts illumined by invisible fire—that is, the brightness of the Holy Spirit, may be free from the blindness of every vice; that the eye of our minds being purified, we may discern those things which are pleasing to thee and conducive to our salvation; so that, after the dark perils of this world, we may deserve to arrive at never-failing light: through thee, Christ Jesus, Saviour of the world, who in perfect Trinity livest and reignest God, world without end. **R.** Amen.

Let us pray.

Almighty, everlasting God, who by thy servant Moses didst command the purest oil to be prepared for lamps to bum continually before thee ; graciously pour forth the grace of thy blessing kp upon these candles ; that as they afford us external light, so by thy bounty the light of thy Spirit may never be inwardly wanting to our minds. Through our Lord ... in the unity of the same Spirit. **R.** Amen.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who wast seen on this day amongst men in the substance of our flesh, and wast offered by thy parents in the temple ; whom the venerable and aged Simeon, enlightened by the light of thy Spirit, knew, received, and blessed ; mercifully grant that, enlightened and taught by the grace of the same Holy Spirit, we may truly acknowledge thee, and faithfully love thee; who, with God the Father in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, livest and reignest God, world without end. Iÿ. Amen.

The Prayers having been said, the candles are sprinkled with holy water and incensed; they are then distributed to the clergy and the people. In the meanwhile the Canticle of Simeon is chanted in the ancient antiphonal manner—that is to say, by inserting the Antiphon after each verse.

Antiphon (Luke ii, 32): A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and for the glory of thy people Israel.

The mission of the Messias here foretold by the aged prophet is twofold in its aim, for it concerns the Gentiles as well as the people of Abraham. The first part of this mission has been carried on for twenty centuries in the con-

version of the pagan world to the Faith; the second on the other hand will be accomplished at the end of the world, when the great mass of the Gentiles, having entered the Church, Israel, too, in order to be saved, will bless him who cometh in the name of the Lord.

Canticle of Simeon (Luke ii, 29-32) : Now dost thou dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace.

Antiphon.—A light, etc.

Canticle.—For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

Antiphon.—A light, etc.

Canticle.—Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

Antiphon.—A light, etc.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

Antiphon.—A light, etc.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Antiphon.—A light, etc.

Collecta at St Adrian

The Basilica of St Adrian is the ancient hall of the *Senatus Romanus,* adapted to Christian worship under Honorius I. It was dedicated to Adrian the celebrated martyr of Nicomedia, some of whose relics were brought from Byzantium to Rome and placed in this basilica. St Adrian and his wife St Natalia were held in great veneration in the Middle Ages, not only among the Orientals, but also among the Latins. The *Regesta* of Farfa speaks of a monastery dedicated to them in the district of Tivoli ; but, without going outside Rome itself, we find on the Esquiline a monastery dedicated to the martyrs Adrian and Lawrence, which Pope Adrian I caused to be restored in honour of his patron saint and namesake.

The blessing of the candles, a rite of foreign origin, being ended, the truly Roman part of the ceremony begins. All is now ready for the procession ; the candles have been distributed, the stational crosses have all reached the church of St Adrian in the Forum, where, together with the clergy, each habited in a dark *paenula* as a sign of penance, a great multitude of the faithful has collected. Whilst the Pope barefooted comes from the *Secretarium*—that is, from St Martina—and, passing through the little portico which separates it from St Adrian, makes his entrance into the church, the *schola* sings the Introit from Psalm xliii : " Arise, O Lord, help us, and deliver us, for thy name's sake. We

have heard, O God, with our ears : our fathers have declared to us. y. Glory be. Arise, O Lord."

If, Septuagesima being come, the time of the holy joys of Christmas has already expired, and if the feast does not fall on a Sunday, the priest or the deacon invites the assembled people to prostrate themselves to the ground and to pray in silence.

y. Let us kneel.

The people prostrate themselves and pray privately. After a few moments the deacon—now it is the subdeacon—gives the order to rise.

y. Arise.

The Pope then brings together in a short liturgical prayer the desires of all present, and thus united—whence we have the word *Collecta*—he presents them to God :

Prayer.—Hear thy people, O Lord, we beseech thee, and grant us to obtain those things inwardly by the light of thy grace, which thou grantest us outwardly to venerate by this annual devotion. Through Christ our Lord. I£. Amen.

The celebrant places the blessed incense in the thurible ; the deacon makes a sign for the stational procession to start :

y. *Procedamus in pace.* Let us go forward in peace.

Iÿ. *In nomine Christi.* Amen. In Christ's name. Amen.

As they proceed, the *schola* sings various antiphons derived from the Byzantine Liturgy in the time of Sergius I.

Antiphon.—Adorn thy chamber, O Sion, and receive Christ the King; embrace Mary, who is the gate of heaven ; for she carries the King of the new light of glory : remaining ever a virgin, she brings in her hands the Son begotten before the day-star : whom Simeon, receiving into his arms, proclaimed to the people to be the Lord of life and death, and the Saviour of the world.

Antiphon (Luke ii, 26-29) : Simeon received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord ; and when they brought the child into the temple, he took him into his arms, and blessed God, and said : Now dost thou dismiss thy servant, O Lord, in peace.

The following responsory is now sung as the procession re-enters the church, but originally on approaching St Mary Major the traditional *Litania ternaria* was intoned.

Iÿ. They offered for him to the Lord a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons : as it is written in the law of the Lord. y. After the days of the purification of Mar}', according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. As it is written, y. Glory be to the Father. As it is written.

At the Mass

Station at St Mary Major.

The mercy that humanity has received in the midst of the temple, of which the Introit speaks to-day, is in truth Jesus, made known in the temple to Simeon and through him to Israel and to all believers.

The Introit is derived from Psalm xlvii : " We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple : according· to thy name, O God, so also is thy praise unto the ends of the earth : thy right hand is full of justice. Great is the Lord, and exceedingly to be praised : in the city of our God, in his holy mountain, ℣. Glory be."

The Collect is as follows : " Almighty, everlasting God, we humbly beseech thy majesty, that as thine only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in the substance of our flesh, so thou wouldst grant that we too may be presented unto thee with hearts made clean. Through the same Lord."

The prophecy of Malachias (iii, 1-4) read to-day as the Lesson is now at last fulfilled. Israel has professedly awaited the Messias for so many centuries, yet when the Angel of the New Covenant comes to his temple for the first time, he enters it wholly unobserved, and the aged Simeon alone greets him as his Saviour. From that day the temple and the priesthood are purified. Jesus himself takes up his abode in the sanctuary and cleanses the new hierarchy, which, instead of the blood of heifers, offers to God pleasing and acceptable sacrifices already symbolized, to use the words of Malachias, " in the days of old and in the ancient years " by the sacrifices of Abel, Abraham, and Melchisedech.

The idea contained in the Greek *Hypapante* pervades the whole Mass ; for which reason the Gradual is taken from the same psalm as the Introit. God has been faithful to his promises, and we have found in the sacred temple at Jerusalem that which the prophets had bidden us hope for in the name of the Lord. " We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple : according to thy name, O God, so also is thy praise unto the ends of the earth, ℣. As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of our God, and in his holy mountain."

" Alleluia, Alleluia, ℣. The old man carried the child: but the child governed the old man. Alleluia."

The alleluiatic verse alludes lightly to the meaning which was given to the verbs *portabat* and *regebat* in the decadent period of Latin. It is probable that this verse was suggested by a sermon which was once attributed to St Augustine, but which in its present form is merely a *cento* (patchwork) prob-

ably put together by St Ambrose Autpert, Abbot of San Vincenzo al Volturno,[1] who died July 19, 778.

After Septuagesima instead of the alleluiatic verse the Canticle of Simeon is recited as above, but without repeating the antiphon between the verses. The characteristic of the psalm *in directum,* or Tract, is that it is sung without the insertion of any acrostic or antiphonal refrain.

The Gospel extract (Luke ii, 22-32), describing the presentation of Jesus in the temple, is allotted in the list of Gospels of the so often quoted Wurzburg Codex to the Octave of Christmas; this is an indication that when the list was drawn up, the feast of February 2 had not as yet been introduced at Rome. This is confirmed by the fact that the continuation of to-day's narrative from St Luke is still read in anticipation on the Sunday immediately following Christmas Day.

Jesus solemnly offers himself on this day by the hands of Mary and Joseph to his heavenly Father in order that in the most absolute and complete sense he may be the Christ of God: *Christus autem Dei.*

He will therefore have but one mission to accomplish in this world, that of rendering to God the homage of his perfect adoration in spirit and in truth, making the fulfilment of his Father's will his sustenance.

All the patriarchs and the elect of the Old Covenant had desired to see the dawn of this great day. Simeon here represents them all. Blessed, then, is the soul that trusts itself to the Lord and awaits his succour with great faith and patience. Simeon waited all through his life, but in the end he was not disappointed, for the Lord gave him even more than he had promised. He had indeed received the assurance that before his death he should see the Messias, and now it is granted to him not only to see his Saviour, but to hold him in his arms, and to press him to his heart.

In the Offertory, which comes from Psalm xliv, that specially Messianic psalm, the Psalmist praises the beauty of the Messias, and the plenitude of grace which resides in him. "Grace is poured abroad in thy lips: therefore hath God blessed thee for ever, and for ages of ages."

The Secret is of a general character. The eucharistie oblation of to-day carries on throughout the ages that deliberate and irrevocable offering which Jesus made of himself in the temple when he entered it for the first time in the arms of Mary and Joseph, in order to initiate the liturgy of our redemption.

[1] In the Abruzzi (Molise) near Isernia, now in ruins. Formerly celebrated for its archives, which, on its suppression, were transferred to Monte Cassino.—Tr.

" Graciously hear our prayers, O Lord; and that the gifts we offer in the sight of thy majesty may be worthy, grant us the help of thy loving-kindness. Through our Lord."

The Preface is that of Christmas Day, and again witnesses to the primitive character of this feast, which is now reckoned among the festivals of the Blessed Virgin.

As with the Gospel Lesson so is the Communion verse also from St Luke (ii, 26) : " Simeon received an answer from the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord."

The whole Mass, as we have already pointed out, is decidedly christological in character, the Post-Communion alone showing a tendency to regard it as a festival of our Lady; that this tendency finally prevailed is due to the influence of Pope Sergius I : " Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord our God, that the most holy mysteries which thou hast given to preserve us in our new life may, by the intercession of blessed Mary, ever a virgin, be a healing remedy for us both now and always. Through our Lord."

The ancient Roman Sacramentaries usually appoint after the Post-Communion prayer another prayer *super populum,* which has been retained in our present Missal only for the week-days in Lent. It was a kind of solemn benediction which the celebrant gave to the people before dismissing them, and took the place of the present : *Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus,* etc., originally reserved to the Pope, as when leaving the church he passed through the crowded ranks of the faithful. The blessing prescribed in the Gregorian Sacramentary is the following :

Diac. y. Humiliate capita vestra Deo.	Deacon, y. Bow down your heads before the Lord.

Then the priest with extended arms, which in some places were supported by two deacons, turning towards the people, prayed thus :

Super populum.

Perfice in nobis, quaesumus. Domine, gratiam tuam, qui justi Simeonis expectationem implesti ; ut sicut ille mortem non vidit priusquam Christum Dominum videre mereretur, ita et nos vitam obtineamus aeternam.	We beseech thee, O Lord, that thou wouldst perfect the work of thy grace, thou who didst fulfil the expectation of the just Simeon. And as he did not see death until he had deserved to behold Christ the Lord, so grant that we too may obtain eternal life.

We may appropriately quote here the charming epigraph with which Sixtus III dedicated the mosaics placed by him in the Esquiline Basilica where the station is held to-day :

VIRGO . MARIA · TIBI XYSTVS · NOVA TECTA · DICAVI
DIGNA · SALVTIFERO · MVNERA · VENTRE · TVO
TE · GENITRIX · IGNARA · VIRI · TE · DENIQVE · FOETA
VISCERIBVS · SALVIS · EDITA · NOSTRA · SALVS
ECCE · TVI · TESTES · VTERI · SIBI · PRAEMIA · PORTANT
SVB · PEDIBVS · JACET · PASSIO · CVIQVE · SVA
FERRVM · FLAMMA · FERAE · FLVVIVS · SAEVVMQVE · VENENVM
TOT · TAMEN · HAS · MORTES · VNA · CORONA · MANET

FEBRUARY 3

St Blaise, Bishop and Martyr

The name of this holy bishop, who was martyred at Sebaste in Cappadocia under Licinius, first appeared in the Roman Calendar about the eleventh century, consequent on the rapid development of his *cultus* at that time in the Eternal City, where some thirty-five churches arose in his honour. The most renowned among these was that one *ad caput seccutac,* near the present Via Giulia, which, restored in 1072 by Abbot Domenico, rose to such great fame as to be placed among the twenty-four privileged Abbeys of Rome.

The following curious Leonine inscription records these works :

HOC · FVIT · INCOEPTVM · RENOVARI · TEMPORE · TEMPLVM
VRBIS · ALEXANDRI - ROMANI · PRAESVLIS · ANNIS
ANNVS · ERAT · DVODENVS · ET - IPSE · SECVNDVS
ANNVS · MILLENVS · GEMINVS · TVNC · SEPTVAGENVS
TEMPORE · QVO · VERBVM . CONCEPIT · VIRGO · SVPERNVM
ANNVS · IN · AVGVSTO · CVRREBAT · MENSE · PERVSTO
SEXTA · DIADENA · ET · FVERAT · INDICTIO · DENA
ABBAS · DOMINICVS · MERITIS · ET · NOMINE · DIGNVS
HANC · AEDEM · COEPIT · PLENE · COMPLEVIT · ET · IDEM
IIICQVE · CRVCIS · LIGNVM · POSVIT · VENERABILE · DIGNVM
ET · VESTEM · DIVAE · GENITRICIS · QVIPPE · MARIAE
ANDREAE · SCI · BLASII · DARIAEQVE · CRISANTHI
PAPAE · SYLVESTRI · DIONYSII · NECNON · SEVERI
HONORI · STEPHANI · MARCI · MARCELLIQVE
TRANQVILLINI · NICOSTRATI · CAESARISQVE
AC · AQVILAE · NEREI · VEL · ACHILLEI
VEL · ERASMI · ATQVE · CATHARINAE · SEV · SANCTORVM · XL
SCE · CAECILIAE
PRISCAE · ZOESQVE SOPHIAE
HAE · SVNT · RELIQVIAE · QVIBVS · ALMVS · FIT · LOCVS · ISTE
NECNON · MVLTORVM · NESCIMVS · NOMINA · QVORVM

In the East the festival of this renowned Bishop of Sebaste is kept on February u.

It is said that the throat of the martyr is preserved in the Vatican Basilica among· the other sacred relics, it having been transferred thither under Eugenius IV (1431-47) from the Abbey *ad caput seccutae,* where it was formerly kept.

In the church in the Rione Arenula also dedicated to St Blaise, S *Blasius arcariorum,* there was preserved in the Middle Ages the episcopal ring supposed at that time to have belonged to the saint, now in the church of S Carlo ai Catinari, which was built almost on the same spot.

The Mass is altogether that of the Common of a Martyr and Bishop as on December 16, the feast of St Eusebius of Vercelli.

FEBRUARY 4

St Andrew Corsini, Bishop and Confessor*

The feast of this eminent Bishop of Fiesole, who died in i373> was first inserted in the Roman Missal by Alexander VII as a semi-double, but Clement XII (1730-40), who belonged to the Corsini family, raised it to a double, and built a magnificent chapel in honour of the saint in the Lateran Basilica.

The Mass is the Common of a Confessor and Bishop.

The Introit is that of St Nicholas on December 6.

In the Collect we pray : " O God, who art ever setting forth in thy church new patterns of virtue, grant that thy people may so follow in the footsteps of blessed Andrew thy confessor and bishop, that they may obtain a like reward."

The Lesson is taken here and there from chapters xliv and xlv of Ecclesiasticus. It exalts the episcopal office, which is pre-eminently a ministry of reconciliation and of peace between God and man, and between one man and another. The grace of God prepares the priest for this twofold mission, for those words which St Bernard wrote are true—viz., that the minister of God *si non placet, non placat.* The pastoral office, therefore, demands not mere goodness, but an eminent state of sanctity, and the entire and absolute surrender of the priest to God, in order that he may truly be what Holy Scripture calls : *Sacerdotes Domini . . . sancti Deo suo.*

The Gradual and the alleluiatic verse are those of the feast of St Peter Chrysologus on December 4 ; the Tract after Septuagesima is identical with that for the feast of St Peter Nolasco, January' 31.

The Gospel is the same as that on December 6 for the

(east of St Nicholas, and the Offertory for that of St Damasus on December 11.

The Secret is generic in expression : " May thy saints ever fill us with gladness, O Lord, we beseech thee ; so that while we call to memory their merits, we may enjoy their intercession."

These Masses of the Common are, as may easily be seen, recent compilations in which the classic rules of the Liturgy are to some extent set aside. In the present instance it is strange that in the " Prayer over the Oblations" the latter are not even mentioned.

The Antiphon for the Communion is that of St Sabbas on December 5.

The Post-Communion expresses the desire that the intercession of the saint whose *natalis* we are keeping, together with our humble gratitude for the eucharistie gift which we have received, may make us still more worthy of divine grace.

FEBRUARY 4

St Eutychius, Martyr " In Catacumbis "

The Roman Martyrology recalls to-day *in Catacumbis* on the Via Appia, the martyr Eutychius, whose name, although it is omitted in the Martyrology of St Jerome, is yet mentioned in the *Notitia de olea sancta,* compiled by Abbot John for Queen Theodolinda of Monza. In the Basilica *ad Catacumbas,* the inscription by St Damasus in honour of this celebrated martyr has remained intact :

EVTYCHIVS · MARTYR · CRVDELIA · JVSSA · TYRAMNI
CARNIFICVMQVE · VIAS · PARITER · TVNC · MILLE · NOCENDI
VINCERE · QVOD · POTVIT ▮ MONSTRAVIT . GLORIA · CHRISTI
CARCERIS · INLVVIEM ▮ SEQVITVR · NOVA · POENA · PER · ARTVS
TESTARVM · FRAGMENTA · PARANT · NE · SOMNVS · ADIRET
BIS · SENI · TRANSIERE · DIES · ALIMENTA · NEGANTVR
MITTITVR · IN · BARATHRVM · SANCTVS · LAVAT · OMNIA · SANGVIS
VVLNERA · QVAE · INTVLERAT · MORTIS · METVENDA · POTESTAS
NOCTE · SOPORIFERA · TVRBANT · INSOMNIA · MENTEM
OSTENDIT · LATEBRzX · INSONTIS · QVAE · MEMBRA · TENERET
QVAERITVR · INVENTVS · COLITVR · FOVET · OMNIA · PRAESTAT
EXPRESSIT · DAMASVS · MERITVM · VENERARE · SEPVLCHRVM

The martyr Eutychius by despising the impious commands of
the tyrant,
And by overcoming the thousand tortures of the executioners,
Showed what the glory of Christ could effect.

To the squalor of the dungeon a new torment for the body is added,
On the ground are scattered broken potsherds to drive away sleep.
For twelve long days all food is denied him.
He is thrust down a steep place where his blood washes
The many wounds inflicted by the insatiable tyrant.
In the silence of the night want of sleep troubles the mind (of Damasus)
And reveals the secret spot where lie hidden the relics of the innocent victim.
He is sought for and is found, and willingly gives heed to the request of all who seek him.
Damasus has sung his praises. Do thou revere his tomb.

We know nothing further about the martyr, consequently those conjectures are valueless which have been founded by some on the verses of Damasus, presuming the saint to have been, until his last confession, one of the many who had fallen away, and then to have atoned for his apostasy by his blood.

FEBRUARY 5

St Agatha, Virgin and Martyr

The *cultus* of this Sicilian martyr, who was venerated also in the East, and whose name is entered in the diptychs of the Roman Canon, dates back to very early times in the Eternal City, where Pope Symmachus built a basilica in her honour on the Via Aureliana and Gregory the Great dedicated to her in 593 an ancient basilica in the Suburra which had been restored before by Flavius Ricimer, in the time of the Arian Goths.

We have a record of this dedication in the Dialogues of St Gregory :[1]

Arianorum ecclesia, in regione Urbis hujus quae Subura dicitur, cum clausa usque ante biennium remansisset, placuit ut in fide catholica, introductis illic beati Sebastiani et sanctae Agathae Martyrum Reliquiis, dedicari debuisset ; quod factum est.

Previously to this dedication the basilica was probably consecrated to the Saviour and the apostles who are represented in the mosaic of the apse. The inscription by Ricimer was as follows :

FLA · RICIMER · VI · MAG · VTRIVSQ . MILITIAE
EXCONS · ORD · PRO · VOTO · SVO · ADORNAVIT

[1] *Dialog.,* lib. III, c. xxx ; *P.L.* LXXVII, col. 288.

The fact that the relics of the Sicilian martyr St Agatha were placed in the ancient Arian sanctuary of the Goths, caused the basilica to be regarded at times as sacred to some Eastern martyr; so much so that on the occasion of the great translations of the bodies of saints from the cemeteries outside the walls, there were also transferred to this church the relics of the so-called Greek martyrs from the cemetery of Callixtus, which are still venerated under the high altar *of* the church of this deaconry.

The feasts of these martyrs are kept on different days in the months of October and November, but as they are no longer included in the Roman Calendar, we give here the text of the inscriptions composed by St Damasus for their tombs.

On the tomb of Maria and her brother Neon :

. . . SVB · D · V ♦ ID . *NOV*
NATA · MARIA · SIMVL · CARO · CVM · FRATRE · NIONE

GAVDENTES · SACRAM · PROMERVERE · FIDEM
DIVITIAS · PROPRIAS · CHRISTI · PRAECEPTA · SECVTI
PAVPERIBVS · LARGA · DISTRIBVERE · MANV
QVORVM · PRAECLARIS · MONITIS · MVLTOQVE · LABORE
ACCESSIT · SVMMO · SANCTA · CATERVA · DEO

POST · ANIMAS · CHRISTO · TRADENTES · SANGVINE · FVSO
VT · VITAM · CAPERENT · NON · TIMVERE · MORI
HORVM · VIRTUES · QVEM · PASSIO · LECTA · DOCEBIT
RITE · SVIS · FAMVLIS · DISCET · ADESSE · DEVM

On the tombs of Paulina, Eusebius, Marcellus, Hippolytus, and Adria :

OLIM · SACRILEGAM · QVAM · MISIT · GRAECIA · TVRBAM
MARTYRII · MERITIS · NVNC · DECORATA · NITET
QVAE · MEDIO · PELAGI · VOTVM · MISERABILE · FECIT
REDDERE · FVNEREO · DONA · NEFANDA · IOVI
HIPPOLYTI · SED · PRIMA · FIDES . CAELESTIBVS · ARMIS
RESPVIT · INSANAM · PESTIFERAMQVE · LVEM
QVEM · MONACHI · RITV · TENVIT · SPELVNCA · LATENTEM
CHRISTICOLIS · GREGIBVS · DVLCE · CVBILE · PARANS
POST . HVNC · ADRIAS · SACRO · MVNDATVR · IN · AMNE
ET · PAVLINA · SVO · CONSOCIATA · VIRO

XIII · KAL · NOV

These inscriptions are splendid pages from the ancient history of the Roman Church which will never be forgotten. About ten other churches dedicated to St Agatha sprang up, on the Cœlian, in the Trastevere, in the Borgo, and on Monte Mario, and all can boast of very considerable antiquity, since

they were built for the greater part by the popes of the early Middle Ages. Famous among the others was that one which stands in the Trastevere near the Basilica of St Chrysogonus, and which was constructed by Pope Gregory II (715-31) after the death of his mother, within the walls of his own paternal abode.

The Introit of the Mass comes from the Greek, and is proper to the feast of St Agatha. It is to be found with some slight variations also in the Milanese Liturgy. When, therefore, this same Introit is said for the Assumption, All Saints, and other feasts, it is simply a later adaptation : " Let us all rejoice in the Lord, celebrating a festival day in honour of blessed Agatha, virgin and martyr ; at whose passion the angels rejoice, and give praise to the Son of God." Psalm xliv. " My heart hath uttered a good word : I speak my works to the King. y. Glory be."

The Collect, like the Secret and the Post-Communion, is from the Common of a Virgin and Martyr, as on the feast of St Barbara, December 4. In this it agrees with the Gregorian Sacramentary, which, however, gives three others from which a choice may be made.

In the Epistle (r Cor. i, 26-31) St Paul points out the profound mystery of grace which enables the weakest and least fitted instruments to accomplish the most wonderful deeds. What in truth can be weaker than a young girl? Yet under the influence of the Holy Ghost, St Agatha fearlessly faces the cruel and foul malice of her persecutors, and crowned with the double crown of virginity and martyrdom, she flies to her heavenly Spouse, and becomes henceforth the protectress of her native city and of the whole Church.

It is a well-known fact that St Agatha is not only invoked at Catania for protection against the eruptions *of* Mount Etna, but that Christians everywhere in ancient times attributed a singular power to her intercession against the perils of earthquake. For this reason we still find numerous chapels dedicated to the Martyr of Catania in all parts of Italy, both in the towns and in the country.

The Gradual is like that given on December 2, the festival of St Bibiana.

The alleluiatic verse from Psalm cxviii appears to allude to the examination of the martyr before her judges ; but her *Acta,* as they have come down to us, are not altogether reliable. " I spoke of thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed."

The Tract, taken from Psalm exxv, is of the Common of Martyrs and is said after Septuagesima in place of this verse.

In the Gospel (Matt, xix, 3-12) the virtue of virginity is praised in terms which may now seem strange to Christian standards of modesty, but our Lord was speaking to coarse-naturcd Jews. Virginity is not, however, a universal law; it is a special vocation, to which God calls only certain chosen souls, those generous souls who with the spiritual sword of mortification voluntarily take upon themselves perfect chastity, in order to consecrate themselves body and soul to God.

It may be noted that the *Evangelarium of* Würzburg appoints the parable of the ten virgins to be read to-day as on the feast of St Agnes.

The Offertory, like that of St Agnes, is also drawn from Psalm xliv : " After her shall virgins be brought to the King ; her neighbours shall be brought to thee."

The Gregorian Sacramentary assigns to the feast of St Agatha one of its classical Prefaces : . . . *per Christum Dominum nostrum. Pro cujus nomine poenarum mortisque contemptum in utroque sexu fidelium cunctis aetatibus contulisti, ut inter felicium Martyrum palmas, Agathen quoque beatissimam virginem victrici patientia coronares. Quae nec minis territa, nec suppliciis superata, de diaboli saevitia triumphavit, quia in tuae Deitatis confessione permansit. Et ideo,* etc.

When will these former riches of the Roman Liturgy be restored to their rightful place of honour, and by giving greater variety to the formularies of our present Missal, assist in reviving the devotion of the faithful to the early martyrs of the Church? This is a desire which we, humbly and submissively, lay at the feet of the Successor of St Peter.

The Communion, derived from the *Acta* of the martyr, is very ancient, but is unlike the usual Roman type of Scriptural antiphons, and betrays what is probably a Sicilian origin. The influence of the Sicilians on the early Roman Liturgy is well known : " On him who vouchsafed to heal all my wounds, and to restore my breast to my body, on him do i call, the living God."

It is noticeable that in the Gelasian Sacramentary the Post-Communion appears to be intended to recall at the end of the Mass the idea developed in the Introit : *Exultamus pariter, et de percepto pane justitiae, et de tuae, Domine, festivitate martyrae Agathae,* etc.

We give here the ancient hymn in honour of St Agatha, erroneously ascribed to Pope Damasus :

Martyris ecce dies Agathae,
Virginis emicat eximiae,
Christus eam sibi qua sociat,
Et diadema duplex decorat.

Now dawns the feast of Agatha,
The illustrious virgin and martyr;
Christ has espoused her to himself,
And crowns her with a double crown.

Stirpe decens, elegans specie,
Sed magis actibus atque fide,
Terrea prospera nil reputans,
Jussa Dei sibi corde ligans.

Of noble race and beauteous form,
More illustrious still by deeds and by faith,
She sets no value at all on earthly well-being.
But binds to her heart the commands of her Lord.

Fortior haec trucibusque viris,
Exposuit sua membra flagris,
Pectore quam fuerit valido
Torta mamilla docet patulo.

Stronger by far than her cruel tormentors,
She yielded her fair limbs to the terrible scourgings,
And proved the great fortitude deep in her bosom,
By enduring in her breasts the bitterest of tortures.

Deliciae cui career erat,
Pastor ovem Petrus hanc recreat;
Inde gavisa magisque flagrans,
Cuncta flagella cucurrit ovans.

To her the dungeon was a place of delight,
And thither came Peter the Shepherd to comfort his lamb.
Thus encouraged and burning with still greater zeal,
She joyfully ran the ever new torments to meet.

Ethnica turba rogum fugiens,
Hujus et ipsa meretur opem;
Quos fidei titulus decorat
His Venerem magis ipsa premat.

The pagan mob fleeing the peril of Etna's fierce flames,
By Agatha's power is effectively aided.
And those who take pride in their title of faithful
From unchastity are also preserved by the saint.

Jam renitens quasi sponsa polo,
Pro miseris supplicet Domino;
Sic sua festa coli faciat,
Se celebrantibus ut faveat.

Now' that as a bride she shines resplendent in heaven,
May she beg the Lord's mercy on those who are wretched,
And whilst here below' we celebrate her feast,
May she be propitious to all who praise her great name.

It is not the martyr's own strength, but grace, which enables him to overcome the torments; therefore the angels exult, not because of his sufferings alone, but because through them God is glorified, and the innocent victim who was outlawed in this life, acquires the right of citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem.

FEBRUARY 6

St Dorothy, Virgin and Martyr

This Eastern saint is recorded thus in the Martyrology of St Jerome : *In Cesaria Cappadocie, passio sancte Dorothae.* Her legend, with the story of the flowers of Paradise sent by the martyr to the lawyer Theophilus, who had begged them of her at the moment of her martyrdom, is so graceful and touching that the name of the saint was included in the Roman Calendar at the height of the Middle Ages.

Her relics are said to be preserved in the church dedicated to her in the Trastevere. It was near this church that in the sixteenth century St Cajetan of Thiene and St Joseph Calasanctius founded their respective religious congregations.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Virgin and Martyr as on the *natalis* of St Emerentiana ; but the feast of St Dorothy, who, during the Byzantine period at Rome, was held in such great veneration that it was customary to affix to the door of her church lists containing the names of those who had not made their Easter Communion, has now become of secondary importance since the institution of that of St Titus.

FEBRUARY 6

St Titus, Bishop and Confessor*

This feast dates only from 1854, when it was instituted by Pius IX. The Fathers of the Church, however, and more especially the Greeks, have lauded the sanctity and zeal of this favourite disciple of St Paul, while the Byzantines celebrate his memory on August 25, and give him the title of " Apostle " : *Μνήμη του άγίου* ἀττοστόλου Τίτου.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Confessor and Bishop as on the feast of St Andrew Corsini, on the fourth of this month, with the exception of the Gospel and the Collect, which latter is inspired by a passage from the Epistle of St Paul to Titus himself. The Lesson which we find in the Missal for October 18, the feast of St Luke, might have seemed more appropriate for to-day. In it St Paul, writing to the Corinthians (2, viii, 16 *sqq.),* highly praises Titus, who, with apostolic solicitude, had voluntarily taken upon himself the labour of going to heal the dissensions in that church, which was then being torn by contending parties.

It appears that this holy disciple of St Paul had a special gift for this office of peace-maker, since once before he had

gone to the same city and restored calm amongst those turbulent spirits.

St Paul, who, during the absence of Titus, had been greatly concerned by the state of affairs at Corinth, when his disciple returned with the joyful news that the rebellious members had repented and recognized anew his authority as Apostle of the Gentiles, wrote these words so expressive of all the affection and gratitude towards Titus which this circumstance aroused in him : *sed qui consolatur humiles, consolatus est nos Deus in adventu Titi (2 Cor.* vii, 6).

Collect: "O God, who didst adorn blessed Titus, thy confessor and bishop, with apostolic virtues : grant through his merits and intercession that we may live righteous and godly lives in this world, and be worthy to win our heavenly country. Through our Lord."

The commemoration is made of St Dorothy, as in the preceding Mass, and then, if it should be in Lent, of the *feria.*

The Gospel (Luke x, 1-9) narrates the first mission of the seventy-two disciples, those first apostolic men. The office of preaching the Word of God is so sacred that no one can lay claim to it of his own ability ; he must be chosen and sent forth by God himself. As the apostle does not speak in his own name but as the ambassador of Christ, so he must not seek either his own interest or his own glory, but that of God and the salvation of souls.

We should note a fine phrase used by St Paul when, in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, he speaks of Titus, Luke, and their companions, as *Apostoli Ecclesiarum, gloria Christi.* It is indeed true that nothing is more pleasing to the Redeemer than zeal for the salvation of souls, for there is no higher vocation than that of the apostolate, in which a man shares in the same mission as that of the Saviour for the redemption of the world. It was this vocation and this perfect correspondence to grace on the part of Titus, that made him so dear to the generous and zealous heart of St Paul. The apostle indeed exhorted him to labour, but Titus himself was *sollicitior,* as he wrote to the Corinthians, so that when the Doctor of the Gentiles went to Troas, he wrote : . . . *propter Evangelium Christi, et ostium mihi apertum esset in Domino, non habui requiem spiritui meo, eo quod non invenerim Titum fratrem meum* (2 Cor. ii, 12-13).

FEBRUARY 7

St Romuald, Abbot*

The feast of this famous reformer of the anachoretic life in the eleventh century (died 1027), who played such a conspicuous part in the history of Rome and the papacy in the reigns of the Saxon Emperors, was instituted by Clement VIII. It is not celebrated on June 19, the anniversary of the saint's death, because that is the date on which the martyrs Gervase and Protase are commemorated, but to-day, the anniversary of the translation of his relics to the monastery of St Blaise at Fabriano, where they still rest.

The Mass is that of the Common of Abbots, as on the feast of St Sabbas, December 5. It is remarkable that the austere Gregory XVI (1831-46), who had been a monk of the Camaldolese cenobitic congregation, which also follows the rule of St Romuald, did not consider it desirable to introduce any alteration into the divine Office, with the object of promoting devotion towards its founder, not even by inserting a special Collect proper to the feast.

St Romuald, besides there being a richly decorated altar dedicated to him in the Basilica of St Andrew at the Clivus Scauri—the present church of St Gregory—gave his name at Rome to a little church near the Forum of Trajan, which existed until a few decades ago, when it was demolished. The picture painted by Andrea Sacchi, which was over the high altar, and which represented the saint's famous vision of the ladder by which white-robed monks were ascending to heaven, is now in the Vatican Gallery.

FEBRUARY 8

St John of Matha, Confessor*

It might almost be said of this saint that he has, as it were, a right of citizenship in the Roman Calendar, not only because he was for many years in attendance on Innocent III (1198-1216) as papal chaplain, but still more because he died on the Cœlian Hill in 1213 and was buried in the venerable church of San Tommaso *in Formis,* near which church the little cell, where he is said to have lived, is still to be seen. His sacred body was carried thence to Spain after the death of Innocent X (1644-55). The church with the adjoining monastery—the only monument in Rome which recalls the memory of the saint—belongs to the Vatican Chapter. The great door, dating from the time of Innocent HI, still exists with its striking mosaic of the Saviour between two slaves,

the one white, and the other black. Round the border of the mosaic runs the legend : 4. *Signum Ordinis Sanctae Trinitatis Redemptionis Captivorum.*

The Mass is that of the Common of a Confessor not a Bishop, as for St Raymund on January 23, with the exception of the Collect, which is proper to the day.

Collect : " O God, who by heavenly power and by means of St John didst found the order of the most holy Trinity for ransoming prisoners from the power of the Saracens, grant, we beseech thee, that, by virtue of his merits pleading for us, we may by thy help be delivered from all bondage whether of soul or body. Through our Lord."

The appellation of the Holy Trinity adopted by the religious order founded by St John of Matha was the sign of a great reawakening of Catholic devotion towards this august mystery of our faith. During the later centuries of the Middle Ages, there were built numerous abbeys, churches, and chapels dedicated to the Blessed Trinity, and Rome, too, had her Abbey SS *Trinitatis Scottorum* in the vicinity of the Basilica of St Lawrence in Damaso.

Moreover the title of the Blessed Trinity is very appropriate to a religious community which devotes itself to restoring to the children of God those most precious of all the gifts with which he has endowed them—viz., liberty and salvation. If there be a divinely inspired work in all the world, it is surely that by which men endeavoured to imitate the Blessed Trinity and to lend their co-operation in the redemption of souls.

FEBRUARY 9

St Apollonia, Virgin and Martyr

The commemoration of this martyr of the East found a place in the Roman Missal towards the end of the Middle Ages, and the circumstance that during her martyrdom her teeth were pulled out by the executioner contributed greatly to the spread of devotion to her as a protectress against toothache.

At Rome, near the Basilica of St Mary in Trastevere, there stood an ancient church dedicated to St Apollonia with a small cemetery beside it; but now it is no longer in existence, and all that remains is its name which is still attached to the piazza. It is on account of this church that the citizenship of the Roman Calendar has been bestowed on St Apollonia.

The Mass is the Common of a Virgin and Martyr as on January 30 for St Martina.

FEBRUARY 9

St Cyril of Alexandria, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church*

This feast was instituted in 1882 by Leo XIII, who chose this day because January 28, on which date the saint's name appears in the Martyrology, is already assigned to another office. The name of St Cyril immediately evokes the memory of those celebrated early sessions of the Council of Ephesus, when, through the agency of Cyril, the most splendid pages of the doctrine concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary were recorded. Nestorius having thrown doubt upon the dogma that in Jesus Christ there is only one person, it consequently resulted from this heresy that there could no longer be bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God, by which the faithful until then had been accustomed to invoke her.

The whole Eastern world was soon in a turmoil because of the negations of the arrogant Bishop of Byzantium ; whereupon Celestine I (423-32) called a Council at Ephesus, of which Cyril—the spiritual heir of the former Pharaohs at Alexandria—was the guiding spirit. The examination into the Catholic tradition concerning the unity of person in the twofold nature in Christ was diligent and thorough and was continued far on into the night. When at length the Fathers, having anathematized Nestorius, decreed that the Blessed Virgin was rightly called *Theotokos* or Mother of God, because in Jesus Christ the human nature was hypostatically united to the Word of God, the people of Ephesus, delirious with joy, accompanied them back to their dwellings with torches, and with thuribles filled with precious perfumes.

The most famous monument at Rome recalling the triumphs of our Blessed Lady at the Council of Ephesus is the Basilica of St Mary Major, in which Sixtus III, the successor of Celestine, caused to be represented in mosaic the most important events in the life of our Saviour and his blessed Mother.

The Byzantines keep the feast of St Cyril on January 18 and also on June 9. In their *Meneia* the saint is praised because he was considered worthy to take the place of the supreme Pontiff Celestine as president of the Council of Ephesus.

This Œcumenical Council had already acclaimed Cyril as Ὁ τῆς *ορθῆ και ομωμήτου πίσπω συνήγορο* .

The Mass of St Cyril is that of the Common of Doctors as it is for St Francis de Sales, on January 29, with the

exception of the proper Collects, in which allusion is made to his special merits in the triumph of the doctrine concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary over the Nestorian heresy at Ephesus. The composer of these prayers, however, seems to have had a too one-sided idea of Cyril's theological action. The Nestorian heresy was chiefly christological and the error regarding our Lady was merely a consequence of it. St Cyril strenuously defended the honour of the Mother and the Son, fearlessly represented the Pope, and by his famous anathemas became, in the eyes of the Eastern Church, the most authoritative upholder of orthodoxy against the Nestorians. Such was the respect in which Cyril was held in olden times, that even to this day the Monophysite Copts, distorting the meaning of his formulas on the unity of person in Christ, quote this holy Doctor in support of their error.

The Greeks are in the habit, not only of giving to Cyril the honourable title of Πάττα *Ἀλεξανδρεία*, but also of representing him with a tiara, and relate that St Celestine conferred these marks of honour upon him when he delegated him as president in his stead at the Council of Ephesus.

The merits of St Cyril obtained for his successors in the patriarchal See of Egypt the title of which they boast to this day : *τη οικουμένη κριτή, orbis terrarum judex.*

The Collect is as follows : " O God, who didst make blessed Cyril, thy confessor and bishop, the invincible champion of the divine motherhood of the most blessed Virgin Mary ; grant through his intercession, that we who believe her to be truly the Mother of God may be saved by her care. Through the same."

The Secret is in these words: " Look graciously, O God almighty, upon our gifts; and, through the intercession of blessed Cyril, grant that we may deserve to receive worthily in our hearts our Lord Jesus Christ, thine only-begotten Son, coeternal with thee in thy glory, who liveth."

The following is the Post-Communion : " We, thy suppliants, who have been refreshed with divine mysteries, beseech thee, O Lord, that we may be helped by the example and merits of the blessed bishop Cyril, and may be able to serve worthily the most holy mother of thine only-begotten Son : who liveth."

The East, the land of Jesus, of the apostles, of the great Doctors and the Councils, has now for many centuries become withered like a branch cut off from the trunk, and languishes because of the fatal schism which separates it from the centre of Catholic unity. How necessary is it that every Catholic should enter into the feelings which prompted Leo XIII to institute the festivals of the most famous Doctors of the East,

thus hastening by prayer and by action the return of those most noble churches to Catholic oneness, under the supreme guidance of Peter, ever faithful to his divine mission of strengthening his brethren.

FEBRUARY 10

St Scholastica, Virgin

The festival of this saint, dove-like in her virgin purity, is already to be found in the twelfth century Antiphonary of the Vatican Basilica, and she certainly owes her popularity to St Gregory the Great, who, in the second book of his Dialogues, describes her last hours with so much grace and charm. In the ninth century, in the time of Leo IV (847-55), whilst at Subiaco the monastic heirs of the Benedictine tradition dedicated their principal monastery to Scholastica, sister of their patriarch St Benedict, the people of Rome also, being desirous of emulating them in their devotion to a saint who was their fellow-citizen, erected, near the diaconal church of St Vitus on the Esquiline, a sanctuary in her honour, which passed in later years into the possession of the Abbey of St Erasmus on the Cœlian Hill.

Close to the Baths of Agrippa there still exists an oratory of the sixteenth century dedicated to SS Benedict and Scholastica, which belongs to the pious congregation of the Norcini.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Virgin, with the exception of the Collect, which recalls the vision of St Benedict who, from his tower on Monte Cassino, saw the pure soul of his sister fly up towards heaven in the form of a dove.

The Introit is the same as for the feast of St Lucy on December 13.

The Collect is proper to the day: "O God, who to show us the path of innocence, didst cause the soul of thy blessed virgin Scholastica to go up into heaven in the form of a dove; grant that by the help of her merits and prayers, we may live in such innocence as to be worthy to win everlasting bliss. Through our Lord."

The Lesson is also that of the feast of St Lucy, but the Gradual is from another part of Psalm xliv: "With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign. Because of truth and meekness and justice: and thv right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully."

The virgin is here likened to a warrior, fully armed, who fights the holy battles of truth and justice. These signify fidelity to God in carrying out her vow of chastity, by which,

with the help of divine grace, she rises above the allurements of the world, the snares of the devil, and also above the weakness of her own sex. This is the glorious victory which Christ achieves through his virgin spouse.

The Tract, which is, as it were, a mystical nuptial hymn, is drawn from the same psalm as the Gradual : " Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy car : for the King hath greatly desired thy beauty. All the rich among the people shall entreat thy countenance : the daughters of kings in thy honour. After her shall virgins be brought to the King : her neighbours shall be brought to thee. They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing : they shall be brought into the temple of the King."

The Gospel with the parable of the ten virgins, and also the Communion which is taken from it, are those of the feast of St Agnes.

The Offertory is likewise taken from Psalm xliv : ''The daughters of kings in thy honour : the queen stood on thy right hand, in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety." This pure gold which adorns the clothing of the mystical queen is symbolical of the purity of intention by which the most ordinary and humble actions of daily life become worthy of eternal life when they are directed to the greater glory of God.

The Secret and the Post-Communion are as on the feast of St Lucy.

St Gregory the Great, relating the last conversation of St Scholastica with her brother, says that on that occasion she had more power than he over the heart of God, because whilst St Benedict upheld the law of discipline and justice she, on the other hand, appealed to a higher law, that of love : *plus potuit, quia plus amavit.* Let us bear in mind this beautiful sentence of St Gregory and make use of it in our spiritual life.

FEBRUARY 11

St Soter, Virgin and Martyr

Station at the Cemetery of Callixtus.

The name of this illustrious ancestress of St Ambrose, after whom a large part of the cemetery of Callixtus is now called, has disappeared from the Gregorian Sacramentary, but is found in that of Gelasius. Her feast was so famous at Rome that in an inscription in the Basilica of St Paul it is recorded that the deceased passed away to a better life *in natale domnae Sitiretis.* . . . The martyrs, before they were

called *sancti,* were honoured with the title of *domni, or domni martyres,* as being the senators, as it were, of the celestial *curia.* The tomb of St Soter stood in the cemetery of Callixtus and was restored by Stephen II (752-57), but a century later Sergius II (844-47), finding it again in a state of disrepair, transported the body of the saint to the titular church of Equitius.

According to the Gelasian Sacramentary to-day is not the anniversary of the martyrdom of St Soter, but of her birth; which shows that the festival of St Agnes *de nativitate* was not a unique privilege, since the same honour was accorded at Rome to other saints.

We give the Collect from the Gelasian Sacramentary:

Oratio

Praesta, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, ut sanctae Soteris, cujus humanitatis celebramus exordia, Martyris beneficia sentiamus. Per Dominum.

Grant, O almighty God, that whilst we celebrate to-day the birth in time of St Soter, thy virgin and martyr, we may experience the benefit of her intercession. Through our Lord.

This feast not being a true *natalis* in the liturgical sense, it is easy to understand that it was ignored in the Gregorian reform.

On this day the Martyrology of St Jerome commemorates also the martyrs Calocerus and Parthenius, interred in the cemetery of Callixtus, whose feast is likewise engraved as for to-day on the marble Calendar of St Sylvester in *Capite,* where their relics are preserved.

FEBRUARY ii

Appearance oe the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary*

This feast was extended to the whole Latin Church under Pius X, half a century after the appearance of the Blessed Virgin to Bernadette Soubirous. As at one time the appearance of the Archangel Michael on Monte Gargano was celebrated in a great many dioceses, so now that the devotion to our Lady's sanctuary at Lourdes has attained to worldwide fame, it seemed fitting that the whole Western Church should in like manner celebrate the numerous appearances of the Immaculate Virgin to that innocent and simple little shepherdess.

These revelations, the genuineness of which has been con-

firmed by thousands of miracles, appear to have been designed by divine Providence as the seal set by heaven on the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, promulgated by Pius IX some years earlier. In a manner, then, they form part of the history of our Catholic dogmas, and from this point of view to-day's liturgical feast is of great apologetic value, inasmuch as it shows that the Holy Ghost, according to the divine promise, *deducet . . . in omnem veritatem.*

The Antiphon for the Introit is derived from the Apocalypse (xxi, 2): "I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Then follows the first verse of Psalm xliv. The outward beauty of the Virgin, when, clad in white, with a blue girdle at her waist, and with roses at her feet, she appeared to the pious Bernadette, designates the sublime virtues which rendered her so pleasing to the Word of God that he chose her in preference to be his Mother.

The first part of the Collect is taken from the Mass of the Immaculate Conception. As God has fittingly co-ordinated the Immaculate Conception of Mary to the Incarnation of his Christ, who blossoms like a flower on a stem rooted in virginal and unsullied ground, so may he also preserve our body and soul from every evil, that we too, in our turn, may become the pure and worthy temple of the Holy Ghost, and the tabernacle of the Godhead.

The Lesson is from the Apocalypse (xi, 19; xii, 1-10), in which St John describes the heavenly temple, and the ark of the Testament, under which figures the Holy Ghost alludes to Mary. She, indeed, is the woman described in the following verses, who is clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and the twelve stars as a diadem about her head, and who appeared to the apostle full of majesty and glory, thus heralding the complete and final triumph of Christ.

The Gradual is drawn from the Canticle of Canticles (ii, 12-14): " The flowers have appeared in our land, the time of pruning is come: the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come: my dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow places of the wall." The allusion to the grotto of the vision is a truly happy one.

The alleluiatic verse (ii, 14) is a continuation of the same Canticle: " Show me thy face, let thy voice sound in my ears; for thy voice is sweet and thy face comely." In the Blessed Virgin Mary all was holiness and grace, for everything proceeded from the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, of whom she was the temple.

After Septuagesima, instead of the preceding verse, the Tract from the Psalms should be sung. The modern com-

poser, however, would seem to have been ignorant of the rules of its composition, for, instead of a psalm, he has given us a succession of verses strung together in haphazard fashion. (Judith xv, 10) : " Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people." (Cant, iv, 7) : " Thou art altogether lovely, O Mary, and stain of original sin is not in thee. Happy art thou, holy Virgin Mary, and most worthy of all praise, for thou didst crush the serpent's head under thy virgin foot."

Mary is the pride and the glory of the human race, for in her the seed of Adam has overcome the deadly serpent, whose poisonous breath never succeeded in sullying the heart of the Virgin.

The Gospel consists of a short passage taken from that which is read on Ember Wednesday in Advent. The Virgin is saluted by the angel, who announces to her the sublime dignity to which God raises her, in choosing her to be the Mother of his only-begotten Son made man. It is Mary who gives to her divine Son the name of Jesus, the Holy Ghost desiring thereby to teach us that whilst Jesus is the Saviour of the human race, Mary is the dispenser of these treasures of redemption.

The Offertory is similar to that appointed for the feast of the Immaculate Conception, except that the alleluia is to-day omitted.

The late composer of the Collects of this Mass was far too preoccupied with the miraculous cures which take place at the grotto of Lourdes, to be able to refrain from repeating in the Secret the same petition for health of body and soul, which he had already expressed in the first Collect. He leads us, therefore, to ask of God that by the merits of the Immaculate Virgin the sacrifice which we are about to offer to the Divine Majesty may rise up to heaven as a sweet savour, and may obtain for us that moral and physical health which we desire.

The Preface is like that on December 8.

The Communion comes from Psalm lxiv : " Thou hast visited the earth and hast plentifully watered it; thou hast many ways enriched it."

This visit, which refreshes the heart and enriches it with good works, is that of Jesus when he comes to us in the Holy Communion. It is from the treasures of Jesus that Mary in her turn derives that wonderful supply of graces which is symbolized at Lourdes by that spring of water gushing forth from the actual rock of the grotto, which, being collected in the *piscinae,* restores health to so many sick persons.

At Lourdes the pilgrims, after hearing Mass and receiving Communion, ask a last blessing from our Lady before returning home. This is the thought which inspires the

Post-Communion of to-day : " May the right hand of thine Immaculate Mother, O Lord, uplift us whom thou hast filled with heavenly food ; that by her help we may become worthy to win our heavenly country."

FEBRUARY 12

The Seven Holy Founders of the Order of the Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

This festival was instituted in 1888 by Leo XIII, who, a short while before, had solemnly inscribed on the roll of the saints the names of the Florentine nobles Bonfiglio Monaldi, Bonagiunta Manetti, Manetto Antellese, Amedeo degli Amedei, Uguccione degli Uguccioni, Sosteneo dei Sostcnei, and Alessio Falconieri.

These illustrious representatives of the patricians of Florence in the thirteenth century, w'hilst Italy was torn by schisms and internecine struggles, withdrew themselves to the solitude of Monte Senario, and founded a new religious order which was entirely devoted to the penitential life, and to the contemplation of the sufferings of the crucified Saviour and his blessed Mother.

The Mass is of recent date, and though it deviates here and there from the ancient liturgical rules, yet evidences the good taste which characterized Leo XIII. The Introit contains a graceful allusion to the miracle of the little children—one of whom is said to have been St Filippo Benizi—whose innocent lips, opened for the first time on one of the public squares of Florence, uttered the praises of those seven holy noblemen, addressing them, so the story goes, by the name which has always remained in common use among the people, of " Serviti," or " Servants of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

The Introit is taken from the Book of Wisdom (x, 20, 21) : " The just sang to thy holy name, O Lord, and they praised with one accord thy victorious hand ; for wisdom opened the mouth of the dumb and made the tongues of infants eloquent."

Psalm viii : " O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whole earth."

The Collect describes both the object of the Order of the Servîtes and the special benefit that we are to ask of God through their intercession. " O Lord Jesus Christ, who to honour the memory of thy most holy Mother's sorrows didst, by means of seven blessed Fathers, beget within thy Church a new family of her Servants; mercifully grant that we may so share their weeping that we may also enjoy their bliss : who livest."

The Lesson comes from Ecclesiasticus (xliv, 1-15), part of which is read in the Missal on the feast of the martyrs John and Paul, and on the Octave of SS Peter and Paul. The whole of it, however, is very appropriate to the holy founders of religious orders.

It is the duty of sons to perpetuate the memory of the virtues of their fathers in order that successive generations may be incited to emulate their sanctity. Their bodies are now resting in the quiet of the tomb, but their mission is not yet at an end; for, whilst the Church sings their praises, their spiritual descendants, those descendants to whom the future belongs, because it is the work inherited from the saints, carry on and bring to a fulfilment the splendid undertakings of their founders.

It is evident that the compilers of this Mass in the time of Leo XIII could not have known very much about the responsorial psalm, which, in early times, followed the first Lesson, and all they aimed at was to put together as best they might some Scriptural verses which might possibly have reference to the sanctuary of Monte Senario where the bodies of the seven saints were venerated, and to the Servîtes themselves, their spiritual descendants, so as to have ready to hand the necessary antiphons and responsories.

We give here the Gradual, drawn not from the Psalter, but from Isaias (lxv, 23): "My elect shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth in trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their posterity was with them," and from Ecclesiasticus (xliv, 14): "Their bodies are buried in peace, and their name liveth unto generation and generation."

The alleluiatic verse is the continuation of the preceding verse, and has already been read at the end of the Lesson: "Alleluia, alleluia. Let the people show forth their wisdom, and the church declare their praise. Alleluia."

After Septuagesima, the alleluiatic verse being omitted, there is recited from Psalm exxv the Tract which is that of the Common of Martyrs: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Going they went and wept, casting their seeds. But coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves."

If this feast is deferred until Eastertide, instead of the Gradual is said the preceding all the place of the original alleluiatu versicle from Psalm xxxvi: "Tin saints, but they shall be preserved

The Gradual and the alleluiatic psalmodie prayers of a similar kin of which are not very clear. Ori

not so ; indeed, the Gregorian Antiphonary shows that their musical structure differs considerably, because at first they were two perfectly distinct psalmodie chants, which followed, the one after the Lesson from the Old Testament, and the other after that from one of the Epistles.

The Gospel is that of the Common of an Abbot as on the feast of St Sabbas on December 5.

The holy mount which is mentioned in the Offertory (Isaias Ivi, 7) is Monte Senario, near Florence ; the holocausts and victims are the prayers and mortifications offered there by the seven holy Founders, whose bodies there rest in peace under the high altar, thus continuing their mystical immolation in union with that of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. " I will bring them into my holy mount, and will make them joyful in my house of prayer; their holocausts and their victims shall please me upon my altar."

The Secret has not that beautiful classic form which distinguishes the earlier Collects of the Roman Sacramentaries. It is devotional in its essence, but its phraseology is quite modern and wanting in style and vigour: ''Receive, we beseech thee, O Lord, these victims which we offer up to thee ; and grant that through the intercession of thy saints, we may serve thee with a free mind and may be enkindled with love for the sorrowing virgin Mother of thy Son. Through our Lord."

The Antiphon for the Communion (John xv, 16) is not derived from the same portion of the Gospel as that which has been already given in to-day's Mass. This is an anomaly, but probably the recent liturgical composers of the Office of the Seven Founders did not realize the fact. " I have chosen you from the world that you should go and should bring forth fruit; and your fruit should remain." Our fruit shall be lasting if we remain united to the tree of eternal life, which is Christ. This is the secret of the ceaseless activity of the saints and of the success of their undertakings.

The following is the Post-Communion : " Having been refreshed with heavenly food, we beseech thee, O Lord, that, as we imitate the example of those whose feast we are keeping, we may faithfully stand by the cross of Jesus with Mary his Mother, and be found wortfiy to receive the fruit of his redemption. Through the same."

In this present life the nuptials between the soul and God take place upon the Cross. There is the bridal chamber of the Son of God, so there can be no true holiness unless it bears the seal of the Mount of Calvary.

FEBRUARY 14

St Valentine, Priest and Martyr

Station at the Cemetery of Valentine on the Via Flaminia.

The festival of this martyr, who suffered during the persecution under the Emperor Claudius II, is to be found in the Gelasian Sacramentary. His sepulchral basilica on the Via Flaminia, built by Pope Julius I (341-52), and restored by Honorius I, was the first to greet the pilgrims as they approached the Eternal City, eagerly desirous of visiting the sepulchres of the ancient heroes of the Faith. The *cultus* of St Valentine developed rapidly on this account, especially in Sabina and in Latium, where a very great number of churches were dedicated to him. There were four at Rome, but in the time of Paschal I (817-24) the body of the saint was transferred to St Praxedes lest, being outside the city walls, it should be desecrated by the Saracens.

We will quote here a striking epigraph from the cemetery of St Valentine. It refers to a priest who at the same time is a doctor of medicine. He is preparing for himself a tomb near that of St Valentine, who also had filled both these occupations.

inc · pastor · MEDicvs · MONVMEN(tum in martyris aula)
(f)ELIX · DVM · SVPEREST · CONDIDIT · I(pse Slbi)
perfecit · CVMCTA · EXcoLviT · Qvi · (ad carmina sistit)
cernet · qvo · jaceat · poena ı (nec ulla manet)
ADDETVR · ET · TIBI ı VALENTINI ı GLODRIA · s(ailCti)
VIVERE · POST · OBITVM · DAT · (tibi) DIGNA (Deus)

The Mass is that of the Common of a Martyr not a Bishop, as on the feast of St Canute, January 19, with the exception of the proper Collects.

The first of these is as follows: " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that we who celebrate the birthday of thy blessed martyr Valentine, may, by the virtue of his intercession, be delivered from all the evils that threaten us. Through our Lord."

Instead of the Lesson from the Gospel of St Matthew (x, 34-42) prescribed for to-day by the Roman Missal, the Würzburg List of Gospels assigns a passage from St Luke (ix, 23-27). The sword which is come to separate a man, not only from his country and from his family, but even from himself, is the Word of God which sacrifices the friends of Christ as living holocausts, and does not permit them to live any other life than that which is from God. In this sense

Paul exclaimed: "I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me."[1]

The Secret, according- to the recent revision of the Missal, is worded thus: " Receive, we beseech thee, O Lord, the gifts worthily offered: and by the interceding merits of blessed Valentine thy martyr, grant thy help for our salvation. Through our Lord." But, as is seen in the Gregorian Sacramentary, the Missal previously had the following prayer as the Secret: " Be appeased, O Lord, we beseech thee, by the gifts which we offer up, and by the intercession of blessed Valentine thy martyr keep us from all danger. Through our Lord."

After the Communion is said this prayer: "May this heavenly mystery be to us, O Lord, the renewal of soul and body, that by the intercession of blessed Valentine thy martyr we may enjoy the effect of what we celebrate. Through our Lord."

It is very interesting to read the descriptions of the solemn liturgical ceremonies in which the Pope took part at Rome in the Middle Ages, but it is necessary to remember at the same time that the glories of those religious triumphs were won by a long series of Popes, priests, and deacons of Rome, who, facing fearlessly during three centuries the cruelty of the Cæsars, wisely governed and faithfully administered the inheritance of Peter and Paul until their lives were cut short by martyrdom.

In those days being raised to the higher posts in the sacred hierarchy meant being on the eve of yielding up one's life for Christ, whence was derived the custom, still retained in the Greek rite, of singing the Martyr's hymn at the ordination of deacons, as though to dedicate them there and then to the supreme honour of sealing their faith in Christ Jesus by the shedding of their blood.

FEBRUARY 15

SS Faustinus and Jovita, Martyrs*

The *cultus* of these martyrs was already very popular at Brescia, when in the time of Gregory II it was introduced also into the Abbey of Monte Cassino and its numerous dependencies by Petronax of Brescia, the restorer of the monastery. 1 owards the end of the Middle Ages the feast even found its way into the Roman Missal; indeed, in 1575 the Brescian colony residing at Rome built a church—now destroyed—in honour of the two patron saints of their native city. The

[1] Galatians ii, 20.

church stood near the Via Giulia, which, in consequence of the great buildings erected by Julius II (1503-13), had become then one of the finest thoroughfares of the city.

The Mass is that of the Common of many Martyrs.

The Introit is from Psalm xxxvi : "The salvation of the just is from the Lord : and he is their protector in the time of trouble." He protects them, says St Augustine, in reference to their last end, for as regards the mortal body, since he did not spare that of his only-begotten Son, still less does he promise to his saints material safety and worldly prosperity : " Do not, therefore," said in conclusion the great Doctor of Hippo, when preaching to his flock, " do not, therefore, expect to have that which the Gospel itself does not promise you."

The Collect is as follows : " O Gori, who dost gladden us by the yearly festival of thy holy martyrs Faustinus and Jovita, grant in thy mercy that we who rejoice in their merits may be inspired by the example of their lives. Through our Lord." This is the spirit in which the Church celebrates the festivals of the saints. Without this spiritual aim of the reformation of our lives, these religious solemnities would be meaningless, for they were established by the Popes precisely as an inducement to the faithful to walk in the footsteps of those whose virtues they praise.

The Lesson is drawn from the Epistle to the Hebrews (x, 32-38), as on January 19, the feast of the martyrs Marius, Martha, Audifax, and Abachum.

The Gradual comes from Psalm xxxiii. In the hour of trial the martyrs realized all the feebleness of their frail nature ; they therefore invoked the help of God's grace and the Lord heard them. He heard them, but he did not withdraw them from the trial, for it was the strengthener of their virtue. Instead he caused them to become stronger than the temptation, and they, with the help of his divine grace, triumphed over the weakness of their nature, over the threats and torments of the tyrants and even over death itself. The Lord was at their side to support them ; he saved them because humbly distrusting themselves, they put all their confidence in him.

The allcluiatic verse is taken from the celebrated hymn of Bishop Niceta of Remesiana, the *Te Deuni* : "The white-robed army of martyrs praise thee, O Lord." " White-robed," because by their death for the Faith they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

After Septuagesima the Tract, from Psalm exxv, is read as on February 12.

In the Roman Missal, as it was before the latest revision,

the Gospel Lesson was derived from St Matthew (xxiv, 3-13), in which Jesus foretells to the apostles the signs which shall precede the end of the world, one of which was to be the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. In those latter days the devil will make a supreme assault upon the kingdom of Christ. The struggle which is to be the prelude of the final triumph of Jesus will become more fierce, and the martyrs, facing death in great numbers for the Faith, will then also furnish before the whole world this apologetic argument in proof of the divine nature of the Christian religion.

This argument will be rejected, but it will not on that account lose any of its force, for it will appeal with all the eloquence of a blood *melius loquentem quam Abel;* whilst in the designs of God that will be the last attempt to convert the unbelievers and save them from perdition. All this is comprised in the simple word *Μάρτυρ,* which means literally (to be) a " witness " for Christ and his Gospel by the shedding of one's own blood.

In the last revision of the Missal, a passage from St Luke (xii, 1-8) has been substituted for that of St Matthew. Jesus encourages his martyrs and, that they may not be overcome by fear *of* torments, he bids them rather to fear God, who can condemn both body and soul to hell. The Providence of God watches over and guards his saints, so that without his permission the wicked cannot touch a hair of their heads. They can do to the saints neither more nor less than that which God permits. We are in God's hands, in the hands of a good God, a wise God, an omnipotent God. What peace must such a thought as this infuse in our souls !

The Offertory is derived from the Book of Wisdom (iii, 1-3) : " The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of malice shall not touch them : in the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, but they are in peace."

According to the text of the Missal before the most recent revision we asked of God in the Secret that the gifts offered to him by the faithful might find favour in his sight, and that through the powerful intercession of the holy martyrs, the people might be protected from all dangers. In the most modern version, this prayer has been altered thus : " Be nigh, O Lord, unto our prayers, which we bring to thee in memory of thy saints, so that wc who trust not in our own righteousness, may be helped by the merits of those who are well-pleasing unto thee. Through our Lord." There is no longer any reference in it to the presenting of the oblations.

The verse for the Communion of the people—the regular distribution of which in early times formed an integral part of the sacrifice, so that only the sick received Communion out-

side the Mass by way of Viaticum—is from the Gospel of St Matthew (x, 27) : " That which I tell you in the dark, speak ye in the light, said the Lord ; and that which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the house-tops." In these words Jesus desires to encourage his Church to confess the Faith boldly, hiding nothing from the whole world of that which he taught her in an obscure corner of Galilee and of Judea.

In the Post-Communion we pray in this manner : " We who are filled with thy healthful sacraments, beseech thee, O Lord, that we may be helped by the prayers of those whose festival we are keeping. Through our Lord."

FEBRUARY 18

St Simeon, Bishop and Martyr*

This holy Bishop was, according to an ancient tradition, the last offshoot of the noble stem of Jesse, and a distant relative of our Saviour. Like James the " brother of the Lord," he espoused the Church of Jerusalem *ut suscitaret semen fratri suo,* and in advanced old age was crowned with the martyrdom of the cross.

The feast of St Simeon was brought into the Roman Calendar in the late Middle Ages, probably on account of a very old church dedicated to him in the ancient *Scorticlaria* near the Tiber. Afterwards, however this church changed its titular saint and was called, first after the prophet Simeon, and then after St Margaret of Cortona.

The Mass is that of the Common of a Martyr and Bishop, as on the day of St Timothy, January 24, with the exception of the first Lesson, which is taken from the Epistle of St James (i, 12-18), in which that apostle teaches us that a trial sent to a Christian is really a grace, since it is a means by which he may gain a more glorious crown.

FEBRUARY 22

St Peter's Chair at Antioch

Station at the Vatican.

As we remarked on January 18, the feast of St Peter's Chair at Rome was kept to-day, according to an ancient Roman tradition which remained unaltered down to the sixteenth century, without Antioch having any say in the matter. There was no idea at all of honouring all the different abodes of the apostle which he occupied successively in

various parts of the world ; the chair at the Vatican became a symbol of the universal primacy which Peter and his successors exercise from Rome over the whole Church; an unprecedented honour which the Eternal City claims exclusively for itself.

The origin of this feast, noted on this day in the Philocalian *Feriale* of 336 : *Natale Petri de Cathedra,* is certainly Roman, but it is omitted in the Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries, without any apparent motive, unless it be for the reason that it usually falls during Lent. The circumstance also, that the *sedes ubi prius sedit sanctus Petrus* in the *Coemeterium Majus* found about the fifth century a peaceful rival in the wooden Chair of the Vatican, contributed to lessen the importance of the ancient seat of the Via Nomentana.

Towards the seventh century reasons which we cannot trace caused the ecclesiastical authorities moreover to limit and then to prevent the veneration which the lower classes by means of lighted lamps and incense paid to a chair cut in the *tufa* of the same *Coemeterium Majus,* and it was probably owing to similar disorders that the Roman Church endeavoured to exclude the feast of February 22 from her Sacramentaries. Tradition, however, was stronger than any edict of proscription, for we find in the Antiphonary of St Peter, that the festival of St Peter's Chair was celebrated at the Vatican on its traditional date, February 22.

The Mass is the same as on January 18, except that there is no commemoration of St Prisca.

The following is the fine poem by St Damasus which former epigraphists of the early Middle Ages copied anew near the Vatican chair of the Prince of the Apostles, which at that time stood in the Baptistery :

AD FONTES

NON · HAEC · HVMANIS · OPIBVS · NON · ARTE MAGISTRA
SED · PRAESTANTE · PETRO · CVI · TRADITA · JANVA · CAELI · EST
ANTISTES · CHRISTI · COMPOSVIT · DAMASVS
VNA · PETRI · SEDES · VNVM · VERVMQVE · LAVACRVM
VINCVLA · NVLLA · TENENT · QVEM · LIQVOR · ISTE · LAVAT

The Martyrology of St Jerome contains to-day this notice : *Romae, Via Tiburtina ad Sanctum Laurentium, natale sanctae Concordiae.* The old Roman itineraries show her tomb near that of the great St Hippolytus, whose *Acta* maintain that she Avas his nurse.

FEBRUARY 23

St Peter Damian, Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church*

This saintly Bishop of Ostia was a fearless and distinguished son of the Order of St Benedict, who, in the eleventh century—a very turbulent period marked by antipopes, heresies, and a lamentable relaxation of the religious spirit—was like a column of fire guiding the faithful along the narrow path of the cross of Christ that leads in safety to heaven. He passed from this life to God on February 22, but because of the feast of the Chair of St Peter, his yearly commemoration takes place to-day. Leo XII ordered that his Office—which was at first observed only by the Benedictines—should be extended to the universal Church.

The Mass is of the Common of Doctors as on January 29, but the first Collect is proper to the feast and recalls the saint's renunciation of a Cardinal's hat, and of the bishopric of Ostia.

Collect : " Grant unto us, we beseech thee, almighty God, to follow the counsels and example of blessed Peter thy confessor and bishop, that, by despising earthly things, we may attain unto everlasting joys. Through our Lord."

FEBRUARY 23 or 24

[According as it is or is not Leap Year)

Vigil of St Matthias the Apostle*

This Vigil was instituted by St Pius V only in the sixteenth century, in order to raise the feast of St Matthias to the same dignity as that of the feasts of the other apostles. Therefore it does not appear in the ancient liturgical documents of Rome, whether it was because the feast usually falls in Lent, or because Matthias, although he was afterwards numbered among the apostles, is placed in the early Roman diptychs among those apostolic men who are spoken of as apostles in a less formal sense, such as were Stephen and Barnabas. Therefore even in the Roman Canon the name of Matthias is not among those of the twelve Apostles—whose number is completed by the addition of the name of Paul—indeed, also in the series of apostolic men, Matthias occupies the second place, between the protomartyr Stephen and the apostle Barnabas.

The Mass is of the Common, as for the Vigil of St Thomas on December 20.

FEBRUARY 24 or 25

St Matthias the Apostle

The feast of St Matthias must have been included in the Roman Calendar between the ninth and the eleventh centuries, for although it is wanting in the earliest Roman Sacramentaries, yet it is to be found in the Antiphonary of the Vatican Basilica of the eleventh century.

The Basilica of St Mary Major has claimed to possess for at least nine centuries the relics of St Matthias, whose likeness was reproduced in mosaic on the façade of that church by order of Pope Eugenius III (1145-53)· In the course of years practically all record of this apostle has perished, from whose teaching St Clement of Alexandria has transmitted to us this beautiful maxim : " We must wholly subdue the body through mortification, subjecting it to the spirit of the crucified Jesus."

The Mass, with the exception of the Lessons and the Collects, has borrowed its antiphons and responsories from other feasts of the apostles.

The Introit is like that for St Andrew's day on November 30.

In the Collect we recall the wonderful manner in which St Matthias was chosen to the Apostolate, and we implore the divine money, which called him to such a sublime dignity, to have compassion on ourselves also. " O God, who didst join blessed Matthias to the company of thine apostles ; grant we beseech thee, that, by his intercession, we may enjoy for evermore thy compassion and lovingkindncss towards us. Through our Lord."

The Lesson from the Acts of the Apostles (i, 15-26) relates how Matthias was elected to fill the place of the traitor Judas, and we should notice that Matthias is only the second of the candidates presented to the apostles by the assembly of the brethren. Yet the Holy Ghost, passing over Joseph called Barnabas, known as the *Just,* chooses instead Matthias, as though to show that his favours are for the humble, for those who arc less appreciated by men, and who by their very weakness are more docile and more responsive to the inspiration of grace.

The Gradual is identical with that on the feast of St Thomas, December 21.

The alleluiatic verse is omitted, and the Tract (Psalm xx, 3-4) is recited instead, as on February 14, St Valentine's day.

The Gospel (Matt, xi, 25-30) shows forth clearly the merit

of Matthias in contrast to the apostle whose place he t k. The latter was a clever manager, prudent according to the world's standard, and one who, having been raised to the dignity of an apostle, seemed undoubtedly to have a splendid future before him. Matthias was not in any way distinguished amongst the disciples of Jesus, and nothing gave reason to anticipate his possible future. Yet Judas, in spite of external appearances and the judgement of men, was, according to the testimony of our Saviour himself, possessed of an evil spirit, condemned on account of his malicious obstinacy, whilst the name of Matthias, the obscure and half-forgotten proselyte, was already inscribed in heaven on the roll of the twelve apostles, the twelve foundation-stones of the Church.

The Offertory is taken from Psalm xliv : " Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth : they shall remember thy name, O Lord, in every progeny and generation."

The Secret is as follows : " May the prayer of holy Matthias thy apostle speed the offerings which we make to thy name, O Lord ; and grant that by it we may be both forgiven and defended. Through our Lord."

In the Sacramentaries we have, instead, this prayer : *Deus, qui proditoris apostatae ruinam, ne Apostolorum tuorum numerus sacratus perfectione careret, beati Matthiae electione supplesti; praesentia munera sanctifica, et per ea nos gratiae tuae virtute confirma.*

The Preface is that of the apostles, as on the feast of St Thomas. The Sacramentaries, however, have the following text : . . . *aeterne Deus, et te laudare mirabilem Deum in beatis Apostolis tuis, in quibus glorificatus es vehementer; per quos Unigeniti tui sacrum Corpus colligis, et in quibus Ecclesiae tuae fundamenta constituis. Unde poscimus clementiam tuam, piissime, omnipotens Deus, ut intercessione beati Apostoli Matthiae, cujus passionis triumphum solemniter celebramus, mercamur a peccatorum nostrorum nexibus solvi, et aeternae vitae felicitati reddi, atque Sanctorum tuorum coetibus connumerari. Per quem.*

The Communion is from Matthew xix, 28: " Ye who have followed me shall sit on seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The merit of the holy apostles does not so much lie in the fact that they abandoned all things, for the cynics also did this, as St Jerome observes, but that they followed Christ, which was a proof of their unbounded faith.

After the Communion this prayer is said : " Grant, we beseech thee, almighty God, that by means of these holy mysteries which we have received, through the intercession of thy blessed apostle Matthias, we may obtain pardon and peace. Through our Lord."

The Sacramentaries, however, give this: *Oratio super*

populum.—Percipiat, Domine, quaesumus, populus tuus, intercedente beato Matthia Apostolo tuo misericordiam quam deposcit, et quam precatur humiliter, indulgentiam consequatur et pacem.

When St Matthias urged with so much earnestness the necessity of subjecting the body to the soul, how vividly must he have beheld before him the image of Christ upon the cross ! Indeed, there is no other argument which convinces us so effectively of the necessity of Christian mortification as the thought that Christ, before entering into his glory, *oportuit pati,* even to becoming the " Man of Sorrows."

EUCHOLOGICAL APPENDIX

POLYCARPI SUPER ROGUM PRAECATIO

Polycarpi ep. Smyrn. et Mart. (t '55) *praecatio, dum super rogum ignem sustineret.*

The -prayer of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna and Martyr, who died 155, *which he uttered whilst watting for the stake to be lighted.*

Domine, Deus omnipotens, Pater dilecti ac benedicti Filii tui Jesu Christi, per quern tui notitiam accepimus; Deus angelorum et virtutum, ac universae creaturae totiusque generis justorum in conspectu tuo viventium; benedico tibi, quoniam me hac die atque hac hora dignatus es, ut partem acciperem in numero Martyrum tuorum in calice Christi tui, ad resurrectionem in vitam aeternam animae et corporis, in incorruptione per Spiritum Sanctum. Inter quos utinam suscipiar hodie coram te in sacrificio pingui et accepto, quaemadmodum praeparasti et mihi praemonstrasti et nunc adimplevisti, Deus mendacii nescius et verax. Quapropter de omnibus laudo te, benedico tibi, glorifico te, cum sempiterno et caelesti Jesu Christo, dilecto Filio tuo, cum quo tibi et Spiritui Sancto gloria et nunc et in futura saecula, Arnen.

O Lord God omnipotent, Father of thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom thou hast revealed thyself to us; O God of the angels and powers, of the whole creation, and of the host of the just who live in thy sight, I bless thee because on this day and in this very hour thou deignest to make me worthy of being numbered among thy martyrs, by partaking of the chalice of thy Christ, so that both my body and my soul by the power of the Holy Ghost may have their part in the incorruptible resurrection to eternal life. Grant that I may be received to-day among the martyrs, offering myself as a complete and acceptable sacrifice in thy sight, according to that which thou didst once reveal to me, and dost now accomplish. O thou, who art the God of truth, in whom no deceit can dwell, for all the many graces that thou hast given me, I bless thee, I glorify thee, together with thy eternal, divine, and beloved Son Jesus Christ, with whom and with the Holy Ghost may be to thee praise now and for evermore. Amen.

(*Cf.* Martyrium Polycarpi, *Patrol. Graec.* (Migne) V, col. 1039-40.)

AD DEIPARAM VIRGINEM, IN FESTO PURIFICATIONIS

Χατρc κίχαριτομόνη
θΐοτόκί rrapOfvt
ίκ σου *γάρ àvcrcihev*
ό ήλιο τη δικαιοσύνη
φωτίζων τού σκότα

Ave gratia plena,
Dei Genitrix Virgo
ex te enim ortus est
sol justitiae,
illuminans qui in tenebris sunt.

Ευφραίνου καί συ	Laetare et tu
πρϊσβϋτα δίκαα	senior juste
δεχόμενε èν ùXévais	suscipiens in ulnis
τον έλίνΟζρώτην	liberatorem
των ψυχών ημών	animarum nostrarum
χαριζόμ^νον ημϊν	donantem nobis (gratiam)
και την άνάστασιν.	et resurrectionem.

(**Ex Anli-phonario Romano, P,L.** LXXVIII, coi. 653.)

The text is in two languages, because of the two nationalities living together in Rome in the early Middle Ages.

THE CULTUS OF THE MARTYRS

PLACET . IERVSALEM · CIVITAS · ORNAMENTO · MARTYRVM
DECORATA
CVIVS · PLATEAE · RESONANT · ALLELVIA

This was written with the point of a *stylus* on the entrance wall of the papal crypt in the cemetery of St Callixtus, by an early and anonymous pilgrim, who was inspired by a liturgical hymn preserved in the Antiphonary.

HYMNUS AD EXTREMAM UNCTIONEM

Christe, caelestis medicina Patris,	O Christ, divine medicine of our Father in heaven,
Verus humanae medicus salutis,	Thou who art the true physician giving health to the world,
Pro fidae plebis precibus potenter Pande favorem.	Grant to the prayers of thy people faithful and true, The favour they ask.
Hos et infirmos tibi supplicamus	Thee we beseech that thou in thy mercy wouldst succour
Quos nocens pestis valetudo quassat,	These who thus are afflicted by deadly disease,
Ut pius morbis releves jacentes, Queis quatiuntur.	And deliver them all from the sickness which So sorely torments them.
Qui potestate manifestus extans.	Thou who indeed hast the power
Mox Petri socrum febribus jacentem,	and in old days didst show it By healing Peter's wife's mother
Reguli prolem puerumque salvans Centurionis.	as she lay ill with a fever, Thou who didst restore unto health the sons, both of the ruler And of the centurion too.
Corpus a morbis, animamque salva ;	Deliver now the body from disease, the soul from sin,
Vulnerum quassis adhibe medelam,	Give relief to him who lies here in suffering and pain
Ne sine fructu cruciatus urat Corpora nostra.	That anguish may not consume in vain His crippled frame.

Euchological Appendix

Ferto languenti populo vigorem,
Efflue largam populo salutem,
Pristinis more solito reformans
Viribus aegros.

Restore their lost vigour to those who are ailing,
Grant renewed health to thy people who on thee do call.
And give back to the sick in abundance
Their earlier strength.

Jam Deus nostros, miserato fletus,
Pro quibus te nunc petimus medere,
Ut tuam omnis recubans medelam
Sentiat aeger.

Have pity, O God, on our sighs and our griefs
And heal all those for whom in sorrow we now pray
That each sick man on his couch of pain may know and feel
Thy gracious aid.

Omnis impulsus perimens recedat,
Omnis incursus crucians liquescat;
Vigor optatae foveat salutis
Membra dolentes.

May each death-bringing threat pass harmless away;
May every wearying pain-thrust vanish and cease,
And may the cheering glow of longed-for health permeate
All aching limbs.

Quo per illata mala dum teruntur,
Eruditorum numero decori,
Compotes intrent sociante fructu
Regna polorum.

So, having been proved by their bitter experience
Of the evils and trials they now are enduring
May they, enriched with well-deserved merits, enter at length
The kingdom of heaven.

Gloria Patri Genitaeque Proli
Et tibi compar utriusque semper
Spiritus, almae deitati soli
Sydera clament.

Let the stars proclaim the glory of the Father,
Of the only-begotten Son, of the Holy Ghost,
And also of the one, eternal Godhead.
Amen.

TITLES GIVEN TO THE DIVINE SAVIOUR

Spes, via, vita, salus, ratio, sapientia, lumen,
Judex, porta, gigas, rex, gemma, propheta, sacerdos,
Messias, Sabaoth, Rabbi, Sponsus, mediator,
Virga, columba, manus, petra, Filius, Emmanuelque,
Vinea, pastor, ovis, pax, radix, vitis, oliva,
Fons, paries, agnus, vitulus, leo, propitiator,
Verbum, homo, rete, lapis, domus, omnia, Christus Jesus.

Hope, way, life, salvation, reason, wisdom, light,
Judge, door, giant, king, gem, prophet, priest,
Messias, God of hosts, Master, Spouse, mediator,
Sceptre, dove, hand, rock, Son, God with us,
Vineyard, shepherd, sheep, peace, root, vine, olive,
Fount, wall, lamb, calf, lion, propitiator,
Word, man, net, stone, house, all, Jesus Christ.

(C/. Damasi, *Efigramm* Ed. Ihm, pp. 68-9, n. 67, Leipzig, 1895.)

THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

I n rebus tantis trina conjunctio mundi
E rigit humanum sensum laudare venustE
S ola salus nobis et mundi summa potestaS
V enit peccati nodum dissolvere fructU
S umma salus cunctis nituit per saecula terriS.

The contemplation of the three kingdoms of nature,
Lifts up the human mind to glorify God.
Our only salvation and the supreme ruler of the world
Came to break by his merits the bonds of our sins.
Now shines forth before the whole world the Saviour of the universe.

(*Op. cit.,* n. 64, p. 67.)

TO OUR LADY OF SORROWS

O Virgo purissima, mater Christi tui ; gladius pertransivit sanctissimam animam tuam, quum crucifixum voluntarie Filium et Deum tuum adspiceres. Quem ne cesses, O Benedicta, rogare ut nobis hoc jejunii tempore peccatorum indulgentiam largiatur.

O most pure Virgin, Mother of thy Christ, behold now the sword of sorrow has pierced thy soul, whilst thou dost contemplate thy Son and thy God who has willingly suffered himself to be nailed to the cross. Cease not to implore him, O thou Blessed One, that during this holy time of fasting he may grant us the pardon of our sins.

Cum te, o Fili, ineffabili modo peperi, dolores partus effugi; nunc autem tota doloribus repleta sum. Video enim te tamquam malefactorem in ligno suspensum, qui terram absque ullo fulcimento suspendisti. Ita super omnia castissima Mater illacrimans loquebatur.

When I gave birth to thee, 0 my Son, in an ineffable manner, I "suffered no pangs, but now I am filled with pain. For I behold thee hanging like a robber on a gibbet, thee who hast poised the globe above the abyss without any support. Thus the most pure Mother made her lament, weeping bitterly.

(Ex Canon. Grace, fer. VI hebdom. mediae et hebdom. Passion.}